VIJAYANAGARA PAINTINGS

C. SIVARAMAMURTI



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Respectfully placed at the Lotus feet of

HIS HOLINESS JAGADGURU
ŚRĪ SANKARĀCHĀRYA

Śrī CHANDRAŚEKHARENDRA SARASVATI SWĀMIGAL

OF KĀÑCHĪ KĀMAKOṬI PĪTHA

Preface

To propose to write a Preface to a book on Indian Art by the late Shri C. Sivaramamurti is like undertaking to gild the lily. Indian art had perhaps never seen, after Ananda Kumaraswami, an art historian of the calibre and exemplary involvement in the *rasa* or essence of the gamuts of that art, like sculpture, painting and bronzes, as of Sivaramamurti. His whole being was saturated with the *ethos* of Indian cultural heritage, of which the superb mastery over the classical sanskrit literature was no mean a part. He wrote copiously and wrote brilliantly, striding the centuries of art creations, across the corridors of its regional inflexions and, in the process, wrote his name as well in the Hall of Fame. Sivaramamurti's main strength and technique lay in quoting close and winsome parallels, between art creations, literature and coeval epigraphical data, in such a way that the integrated textures of the cultured society of India's past lay revealed to us at talking distance. Another flair of his — one born out of his own considerable artistic gift of painting, sketching and sculpting — was to endow his descriptions and notes with an aesthetic high point which comes only out of an experience of the nuances of creative art. Often, he added line-drawing illustrations — many of which will be found reproduced in the book under reference here — of his own to his articles and books which have the capacity of summing up, in the few vital strokes and details he gave, the real flavour of the original and its stylistic content. It is needless to add that all this was equally the sequel at various stages to the years of curatorial and supervisory work as the Officer-in-charge and Head respectively that he had put in, first at the Government Museum, Madras, then at the Indian Museum under the Archeological Survey of India at Calcutta and later in the National Museum, New Delhi. His was a mind — steeped as it was in the religious lore of India from the Vedic times in a traditional kaleidoscopic pattern — which virtually participated in the *bhāva* of all schools of art on a pan-Indian basis as if he was a contemporary witness, and his close familiarity with Tamil and Telugu alike made this even more comprehensive and diversified.

The students and scholars of the mediaeval art of painting of the Vijayanagara and Nāyaka times — the subject matter of the book under release — should be deeply grateful for this highly satisfying rendering of the highlights of the art of the period — in the realm of mural paintings. Fully realising that this art was not suddenly born but was the end-product of several important stages of sculpture and fine arts of the time of the Satavahanas, Pallavas, Pandyas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Hoysalas, he has done well to cover the illuminating galaxy of these traditions as the fitting background to the study of Vijayanagara paintings. He has drawn from a wide-ranging vista of mural creations in several parts of the far-flung Vijayanagara empire and brought out the variety, grandeur, authentic familiarity with religious lore, and last but not the least, the technical competence of the artist guilds who had chosen to display them on the walls of the temples for the edifications of the worshippers and visitors, mostly drawn from common folks who were them-

selves inured to those traditions for centuries. His chapterisations are practical, his wealth of data quite characteristic of his prodigious mind, and the choice selections of illustrations compiled by him truly panoramic.

Sivaramamurti, in his lifetime, always responded to the activities of young scholars and old, readily contributing an appreciative preface to their works. In the rebound, it had become my fortunate task, to add a preface to one of his own volumes — which by its very nature and the untimely demise of this great savant — is a memorial tribute of mine, as well. I should indeed thank the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for having taken great pains in undertaking the work, despite several obstacles and also in having entrusted to me this enjoyable and significant task of a prefatory appreciation. The book is bound to be well received by all ardent scholars of Vijayanagara art whose nuances and grand dimensions and ramifications during and after that period in the Nayaka times have been delineated in a thorough manner, perhaps for the first time. The copious illustrations certainly form an adequately attractive and valuable part of the book and several of the centres described like Tiruppudaimarudur and Tiruvalanjuli, noticed here and there in recent times, have received their worthy recognition and historical importance, for the first time authentically in this book. Sivaramamurti's voluminous contributions to the art of India have added another lustrous gem to their composition in this work, and one of the later phases of the Mediaeval art repertory of India has been presented in all its variety, grandeur and inner spiritual resplendence. The publishers and those who helped the book through the press are to be duly congratulated for the definitive production they have brought out which will serve as a beacon-light on the Vijayanagara mural art for young scholars.

— K. V. Soundara Rajan

Chapter I

Prelude

SOUTH INDIA HAS BEEN a great repository of art in various forms, music, dance, architecture, sculpture, painting, metal casting, ivory work, wood carving, the finest silk weaving and a host of other decorative arts, too numerous to enumerate. In all these there has always been a continuous tradition from the earliest centuries. Empires had come into existence, disappeared or given place to fresh ones at various stages of history; but all through the sands of time the stream of culture has been a continuous one. It is fascinating to study and understand each one of these phases of art.

Painting has been considered in the *Chitrasūtra* of the *Vishṇudharmottara,* the early standard text on painting, as the premier art, as the art that takes rank with the highest and noblest in different spheres. Just as Sumeru is the best of mountains, as Garuḍa is the foremost of the birds, as the king is the chief among men, similarly the best of *chitra* is the most praiseworthy among the fine arts: *yatha sumeruḥ pravaro nagānām yathāṇḍajānām garuḍaḥ pradhānaḥ, yathā narāṇām pravaraḥ kshitīśas tathā kalānām iha chitrakalpaḥ, Vishṇudharmottara* 3.43.39 considered so high, it was practised by several. Every *nāgaraka,* savoir vivre, recipient of polite education, had some knowledge of sculpture and painting and certainly connoisseurship to appreciate the best in art. Even the courtesans learnt the *Chitrasūtra* among other *kalās* or arts mainly to brandish their skill and accomplishment. The *Kuṭṭanīmata,* written by Damodaragupta, an eighth century Minister of Kashmir, mentions the *chitrasūtra* among the many texts learnt by Mālatī, the beautiful and accomplished courtesan of Vārāṇasī: *bharataviśākhiladattilavṛikshāyurvedachitrasūtreshu, patrachchhedavidhāne bhramakarmaṇi pustasūdaśāstreshu, Kuṭṭanīmata* 124.

In the *Kāmasūtra,* Vātsyāyana describes the set up and arrangement of the living room of a typical *nāgaraka,* an urban gentleman of taste with a knowledge of the *vinodasthānas* and

a keen eye and ear for painting, dance and music. This includes a lute suspended from a peg, a painting board, a box full of colours and brushes, a book of literary value: *nāgadantāvasaktā vīṇā, chitraphalakam vartikāsamudgakaḥ, yaḥ kaśchit pustakaḥ, kuraṇṭakamālās cha, Kāmasūtra* 4. 10.

We know that this was learnt as a great amusement and hobby, by several as part of polite education, Rāma himself being described by Vālmīki as knowledgeable in *vaihārika śilpas,* arts for amusement like painting, dance, music: *vaihārikāṇām śilpānām vettā, Rāmāyaṇa 1.* The *samvāhaka* in the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* laments that an art, learnt as an accomplishment, had, in changed circumstances, become his means of livelihood: *kaleti śikshitā ājīvikedānīm samvṛittā, Mṛichchhakaṭika* 2.

From the earliest times, the state itself tried to foster the fine arts. Naturally in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra,* it is mentioned as obligatory on the part of the State to support the art masters that spread their knowledge among pupils from such professions as required proficiency in different branches of the fine arts as a great mark of their accomplishment, as it thereby enhanced the prestige of the state itself through the renown of such professionals: *gītavādyapāṭhyanṛittanāṭyāksharachitravīṇāveṇumṛidaṅgaparachittajñānagandhamālyasamyūhanasampādanasamvāhanavaiśikakalājñānāni gaṇikādāsīraṅgopajīvinīścha grāhayato rājamaṇḍalād ājīvam kuryāt, Arthaśāstra* 2, 17, 44.

Proficiency in art was considered so important an accomplishment, that there were those who would try to dabble in it even if they were incompetent. Such inferior painters also existed along with the great masters who produced masterpieces. In an early one-act play by Śyāmalaka, there is mention of those known as Ḍiṇḍins, who by their clumsy painting and smudging ruined real good paintings and painted sculptures of temples by dabbing colours on them indiscriminately. They are described as not very different from monkeys for adding their disfiguring patches of garish colours washes and use of sharp instruments: *esha khalu pradyumnadevāyatanasya vaijayantīm abhiliskhati, etad ḍiṇḍitvam nāma bhoḥ, ḍiṇḍino hi nāmaite nātiviprakrishṭā vānarebhyaḥ, bhoḥ kiñcha tāvad asya ḍiṇḍikeshu priyatvam, ḍiṇḍino hi nāma, ālekhyam ātmalikhibhir gamayanti nāśam saudheshu kūrchakamashīmalam arpayanti, ādāya tīkshṇataradhāram ayovikāram prāsādabhūmishu ghuṇakriyayā charanti, Pādatāḍitaka,* p. 21.

Though the masters loved most excellent line work, it is the colours that please mostly the general spectators. That is why a painting of the popular theme of Lakshmī, even of inferior workmanship, was considered a lovely one, if colourful. Śyāmilaka gives this instance of how several defects in a picture are covered up by a garish colour arrangement specially with those not so discerning in their taste. The inordinate passionate among the love-lorn hug even a plain-looking damsel or even one devoid of beauty if she was fair and well-dressed, like Lakshmī portrayed in a picture with a loud colour scheme drowning the defects: *varṇānurupojjvalachāruveshām lakshmīm ivālekhyapaṭe nivishṭām, sāpahnavām kāmishu kāmavanto' rūpām virūpām api kāmayante, Pādatāḍitaka,* p. 31. But this is only by those who had no special fascination for the nuances of art.

As stated by Rājaśekhara, the king was to convene an assembly of not only poets and writers, but also of masters in dance, architecture, music, sculpture, painting and other arts: *rājā kaviḥ kavisamājam vidadhīta, rājani kavau lokaḥ kavis syāt, sa kāvyaparīkshāyai sabhām kārayet, sā shodaśabhis stambhais chaturbhir dvārair ashṭabhir mattavāraṇābhir upetā syāt, tadanulagnam rājñaḥ keligriham, madhyesabham chatustambhāntarā hastamātrotsedhasamaṇibhūmikā, tasyām rājāsanam, tasya chottaratas saṁskṛitāḥ kavayo niviśeran,...... paśchimenāpabhramsinaḥ kavayaḥ, tataḥ param chitralepyakṛito māṇikyabandhakās traikaṭikās svarṇakāravardhakilohakārā anye'pi tathāvidhāḥ, Kāvyamīmāmsā* 1, 10, p. 54-55.

The kings themselves were painters, musicians, architects and authors of great renown not only of poetry but of scientific texts and works of art and architecture. Bhoja, Samudragupta, Harshavardhana, Pallava Mahendravarman and others are great examples. In such an atmosphere of great art fostered with affection and devotion by the highest in the land, the kings as well as the noblemen, art was appreciated even by ascetics, who had no interest



Fig. 1. Bhārhut and Amarāvatī styles

in life other than contemplation on the Almighty, as they could have divine vision through excellent examples of sculpture and painting, through soft strains of music describing the qualities of the Almighty and by witnessing delicate movements in dance that revealed in its own language the glory of the Lord. Arts flourished wonderfully and there was thus a continuous open flood-gate enabling stream that flowed perennially.

Chapter II

Early Phase

IN THIS CONTEXT A short historical introduction to the beginnings of Vijayanagara art would be most appropriate. The history of South India is a fascinating story though obscure before the vast empire of the Mauryas made a mark in the whole subcontinent. It is interesting to know that though such a great emperor Aśoka could still have in the extreme south friendly neighbours ruling independent kingdoms in the Choḷas, Pāṇḍyas and Cheras who are mentioned by name in the rock-edicts like the Yavana king, Antiyoka (Antichus II, Theos, Greek king of Western Asia) and beyond, Turamaya (Ptolemy II Philadelphus, Greek king of Egypt), Antikini (Antigonas Gonatas, Greek king of Macedonia), Maka, (Magas, Greek king of Cyrene in north Africa), Anikasundara (Alexander, Greek king of Epirus or Corinth), and others and in the southern direction of his empire, the Choḷas and the Pāṇḍyas living as far as Tāmraparṇī. He also mentions Yavanas, Kāmbojas, Nābhakas, Bhojas, Paitryaṇikas, Gandhāras, Sātiyaputras and Keralaputras. His approach towards the neighbouring kingdoms was based on the utmost friendship. Aśoka was really a *dharmavijayī* in the sense that he won the hearts of the entire civilised world of the day, a real *dharmavijayī* by his affectionate approach through *dharma* in spreading and protecting *dharma in* every way, and not the technically understood *dharmavijayī* according to the *Arthaśāstra*, where a king was first expected to establish his supremacy by his overweaning power assuring him victory, but immediately to act with utmost magnanimity towards the defeated by giving them back their territory with additions if possible and with no desire for material advantage in any form. Even Raghu's conquest was not one of capturing the kingdom but restoring it in its entirety, as he was a righteous conqueror coveting neither the wealth nor the territory of the vanquished opponent: *grihītapratimuktasya sa dharmavijayī nṛipaḥ, śriyam mahendranāthasya jahāra na tu medinīm, Raghuvamśa* 4, 43. Aśoka thus fostered greater cultural, moral and spiritual unity than he could have achieved by battles won or power displayed. This accounts for the

highest respect for the traditions of the empire of Aśoka surviving in every field, cultural, artistic, philosophic, all over the land, even beyond the borders of his empire. South India was not an exception.

After the break up of the Mauryan empire in about 200 B.C. the Sātavāhanas established themselves as supreme rulers in the South as the Śuṅgas in the North and the Chedis in Kaliṅga. The empire of the Sātavāhanas was huge, extending over the whole of the Deccan and the South from sea to sea. That the extreme South was also under the *(Fig. 1)* Sātavāhanas is clearly proved by the rare Sātavāhana coin of Vāśishṭhīputra Śrīśātakarṇī, a bilingual variety, of which only three surviving examples are known. It has on its obverse the earliest Sātavāhana portrait on a coin which precedes that of Śrī Yajña Śātakarṇī in this feature and the expression by symbols of the tremendous fame of the emperor that reached impossible heights and depths. It is the usual Brāhmī legend on the obverse showing the portrait giving the name *vasiṭhīputasa siri sātakaṇisa*. The legend repeated on the reverse is not in Brāhmī but in Tamil. The Tamil word *tiru* replaces the *siri* and *makan* the word *putra, rajño* being substituted by *arachan*, the whole reading *arachanuku vachiṭṭimakanuku tiru chātakaṇiku*. The Sātavāhanas were great patrons of literature, Sanskrit and Prākṛit, particularly the latter. It is interesting that the Śātakarṇī encouraged the use of one of the oldest vernaculars in India, Tamil, along with Prākṛit by making his coins bilingual. (Seminar on Inscriptions 1966, Madras 1968, pp. 200-202).



Fig. 2. The Queen fainting, Chhaddanta Jātaka, 2nd century B.C., Cave 10, Ajaṇṭā (after Yazdani)

We should remember that Iḷaṅgoaḍigal, the author of the famous Tamil classic *Śilappatihāram*, was from the Chera country, which proves the significant place of Tamil in the entire area of the South in the earliest centuries preceding and following the Christian era. The power and the pomp of the early Sātavāhanas can be imagined from the Nānāghāṭ cave inscription, Śātakarṇī being described as having performed several sacrifices, and making gifts of huge treasures, proclaiming the unlimited resources of a vast empire.

The Sātavāhana emperors were great patrons of art and literature. Guṇāḍhya, the author of the *Bṛihatkathā*, was a contemporary of the early Sātavāhana monarchs. Hāla, a gifted poet, was a Sātavāhana sovereign, and the *Gāthāsaptaśatī*, is praised by Bāṇa in unequivocal terms, 'Satavahana wrote an immortal classic work': *avināśinam agrāmyam akarot sātavāhanaḥ. Harshacharita* 1. The eastern gateway of Sāñchī is a lasting testimony to the taste of the Sātavāhana sovereign whose carvers fashioned it. As they were ivory carvers from Vidiśā, capable of very delicate work, this great delicacy is reflected also in the stone carving of this *toraṇa*. The early caves in Western India like Bhājā and Beḍsā, the magnificent but now lost except for the surviving remains of the exquisitely carved Amarāvatī rail illustrates the high water mark of South Indian sculpture which set the style and tradition for all subsequent art, Vākāṭaka or Chāḷukya, Pallava or Pāṇḍya, Chera or Choḷa, Rāshṭrakūṭa or any other. The recently found beautiful sculpture of the Sātavāhana period, contemporary with the late Amarāvatī phase of 150 to 200 A.D., are the carvings from Sannati in Karṇāṭaka where identical themes are carved in nearly identical style illustrating how one common tradition prevailed over the whole vast area of the empire. The early style at Jaggayyapeṭa and at Guḍimallam, observed clearly in the Māndhātā panel from the former spot and Śiva against *liṅga* at the latter, is equally answered by stylistically close conforming form in the Bhājā, Pītalkhora and other caves in Western India. By a strange decree of destiny, the only surviving paintings of the second century B.C. sufficiently important and clear for study to understand the tradition of painting in India at that time anywhere, are from Caves 9 and 10 at Ajaṇṭā which belong to the Sātavāhana age. An inscription in Cave 10 in Brāhmī letters of the second century B.C. mentions one Vāśishṭhīputra Kaṭahadi as its donor. The worship of the *Bodhi* tree, the *Sāma* and *Chchhaddanta Jātakas* are here graphically represented, though unfortunately now largely mutilated. The theme of the adoration of the *Bodhi* tree presents a delightful bevy of maidens engaged in music and dance. This musical scene along with that from Bhājā and from Amarāvatī constitutes a very precious visual document of orchestral detail. *(Fig. 2)* The fainting of the queen at the sight of the tusks of the magnanimous *Chchhaddanta* as depicted in the painting in Cave 10, is a type, that survives two centuries later at Goli, near the mouth of the Kṛishṇā and two or three centuries later even in the Ikshvāku period. Still later, by another three centuries, at Ajaṇṭā, the Vākāṭaka painting of the fainting princess is represented in almost identical manner, illustrated by persistance of great traditions. Prof. Jouveau Dubreuil who had written so much to enlighten and reveal the glory of South Indian architecture, sculpture and painting, discovered fragments of paintings, including a feminine figure delicately portrayed in the best tradition of the second century A.D., in the Beḍsā cave.

It is this tradition that was continued by the Vākāṭakas who were the supreme rulers of the Deccan as successors of the Sātavāhanas. The Vākāṭakas themselves were from the Kṛishṇā valley as a few inscriptions of the end of the second century at Amarāvatī mention them by name. The Vākāṭakas appear to have migrated from the Kṛishṇā valley and established a kingdom that soon grew powerful in the Deccan. At the height of their power, they were the imperial successors of the Sātavāhanas and had matrimonial alliances with the Bhāraśivas and the Guptas. It is the Vatsagulma branch from Sarvasena of the

Vākāṭaka family that is responsible for the famous caves and paintings at Ajaṇṭā. The Vākāṭakas are also famous as great patrons of art and literature. That is why Bāṇa praises Pravarasena II of the main line for his literary talent and appreciation of poetry. The fame of Pravarasena glowing like the lily, has crossed the ocean like the monkey army: *kīrtiḥ pravarasenasya prayātā kumodjvalā, sāgarasya param pāram kapiseneva setunā, Harshacharita* 1. He was also a patron of the other phases of fine arts.

In Cave 16, there is an inscription which describes its dedication to the monks by Varāhadeva, the minister of the Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa in the latter half of the fifth century A.D. Another inscription in Cave 26 mentions the gift of the temple of Sugata by the monk, Buddhabhadra, a friend of Bhavirāja, the minister of the king of Aśmaka. The art of Ajaṇṭā, a distinct Vākāṭaka phase, continues the great tradition of the Sātavāhanas. The inscription of Varāhadeva is of special interest and instructive in understanding the art so devotedly lavished by the architect and sculptors of these rock-cut caves painted so beautifully in their interior. The inscription describes *vihāras*, as adorned with windows, doors, beautiful picture galleries (*vīthīs*), carvings of clestial nymphs, ornamental pillars and stairs and a shrine (*chaitya mandira*) and a large reservoir: *gavākshaniryūhasuvīthivedikāsurendrakanyāpratimādyalaṅkṛitam, manoharastambhavibhaṅga. . . . . rachaityamandiram, ma. . . . . . talasannivishṭam viśa. . . . namanobhirāmam, va. . . . ñchāmbumahānidhānam nagendraveśmādibhir apyalaṁkṛitam.*

The Vākāṭaka painter has studied nature around him and seen great beauty with intense sympathy. Plant and animal life absorbed his interest. He has bestowed tender affection on themes of flora and fauna wherever he could depict them. The geese in the *Hamsa Jātaka* and the deer in the *Mṛiga Jātaka* are examples, both from Cave 17, of the painter's sensitive approach to the theme of animal and birds. He has been at home equally in the royal court, representing with great vivacity its dazzling magnificence, in the simplicity of a rural setting and in the serene beauty of the hermit's life in sylvan surroundings. The *Vessantara Jātaka* shows the munificence of the prince, and the poor Brāhmin, appearing as a beggar. The scene of prince Vessantara with his consort in the chariot on the royal high road, portraying various merchants plying their trade; in Cave 27, is a strikingly beautiful picture of urban life in ancient India. The landing in Ceylon is a magnificent representation of royal glory. The place of pride for ships that the very name *Satakarṇī*, fleet of ships suggests, is indicated in their great navy and its grandeur in this painting in Cave 18. The interior of the palace, giving a glimpse of the king and queen in the harem, or in the garden, indicates that nothing was hidden from the gaze of the court painter. The painter could be graphic in his portrayal, of 'a loving royal couple, the princess resting shyly almost in the lap of her lover', as Kālidāsa has it: *tām aṅkam āropya kṛiśāṅgayashṭim varṇāntarākrāntapayodharāgrām, vilajjamānām rahasi pratītaḥ paprachchha rāmām ramaṇo'bhilāsham, Raghuvamśa* 14, 27. He could present the charm of a darting glance, or the close embrace, entwined by the arm recalling the line of Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta*: *kaṇṭhāśleshapraṇayini jane kim punar dūrasamsthe, Meghadūta* 1.3. or that of the beautiful eye of the lovely damsel described so significantly by Damodaragupta as the abode of Cupid 'victorious in Love who is the bee on the lotus-face of Rati and whose abode is the sidelong glance of the beloved': *sa jayati saṅkalpabhavo ratimukhaśatapatrachumbanabhramaraḥ, yasyānukūlalanānayanāntavilokanam vasatiḥ, Kuṭṭanīmata*. The toilet of the (*Fig. 3*) princess depicts a similar theme. There are probably no better examples of delicate movement than the divine musicians floating in the air from Cave 17 to illustrate the imagination of the painter. The lines portraying the figures of Ajaṇṭā are so sure, sinuous, suggesting form and depth, that we at once recall the reference appreciating effective sketching in the *Viddhasālabhañjikā*: *api laghu likhiteyam dṛiśyate pūrṇamūrtiḥ*, where, with the mini-

mum of drawing, the maximum effect of full form is produced. The masters at Ajaṇṭā have demonstrated the excellence of line drawing as given in the *Vishṇudharmottara*: *rekhām praśamsantyāchāryāḥ* 'the masters praise effective line drawing'.

The manipulation of colours in Ajaṇṭā, with the effect of light and shade created by the method of lines and dots, *binduja* and *patravartana,* stippling and hatching, described in the *Chitrasūtra,* has made the paintings, with their simple scheme of red ochre, yellow ochre, lamp black, lapiz lazuli and white, just five colours, applied on a coat of lime extremely smooth and polished, a magnificent series, that has attracted the entire world as a wonder never to be missed in Indian art.



Fig. 3. Flying celestials, Ajaṇṭā

(Fig. 4) Reminders of sculptural forms from Amarāvatī in the painted figures at Ajaṇṭā indicate that the Vākāṭaka traditions are derived from earlier Sātavāhana sources. It is interesting again to see how the Vākāṭaka idiom continued in later sculpture. Figures in identical poses, found at Mahābalipuram, recalling those at Ajaṇṭā, point to a common source in earlier ones from Amarāvatī. The identical study of the right leg put forward in exactly the same pose, at Ajaṇṭā and at Mahabālipuram, cannot escape attention. Even as late as (Fig. 5) in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries A.D. there is an identical pose of a princess standing from Ajaṇṭā following a sculptural form at Amarāvatī, repeated in the nymph under the wish-fulfilling creeper in one of the two feminine sculptural masterpieces in the Choḷa temple at Tribhuvanam a form continued even later in the Vijayanagara period, and with equal felicity.



Fig. 4. Echoes of Amarāvatī in Ajaṇṭā

The Vākāṭakas were succeeded by the Early Western Chāḷukyas who established an equally important empire most powerful in early medieval Deccan. Puḷakeśi I was succeeded by his warlike son Kīrtivarman, father of the famous Puḷakeśi II. Maṅgaḷeśa, the younger brother of Kīrtivarman, succeeded his brother to the throne and preceded Puḷakeśi II. It should be said to the glory of Puḷakeśi II that as the lord of the entire southern region, *sakaladakshiṇāpatheśvara*, he could stop the forces of Harsha preventing their crossing the Narmadā by destroying whole troops of stately elephants and, as the inscription puts it, devastating the *harsha* or joy of Harsha, the king. The great glory of Maṅgaḷeśa is clearly given in an inscription where the family tradition of the performance of several sacrifices testify to his devotion to the *dharma* aspect of life. His victories in the battle, his possession of the three powers—power, counsel and initiative, *prabhu, mantra* and *utsāha*, indicate the *artha* aspect of his wordly success as a true Kshatriya. There is so much that is implied in the magnificent decoration of the Vaishṇava cave at Bādāmī which is his creation. Probably there is a reference to his name as Maṅgaḷa, a mansion of *maṅgaḷa*, auspiciousness counted in terms of military success, 'the auspicious abode of victory on earth extending to the shores of the four oceans': *chatussāgaraparyantāvanivijayamaṅgalakāgārah.*

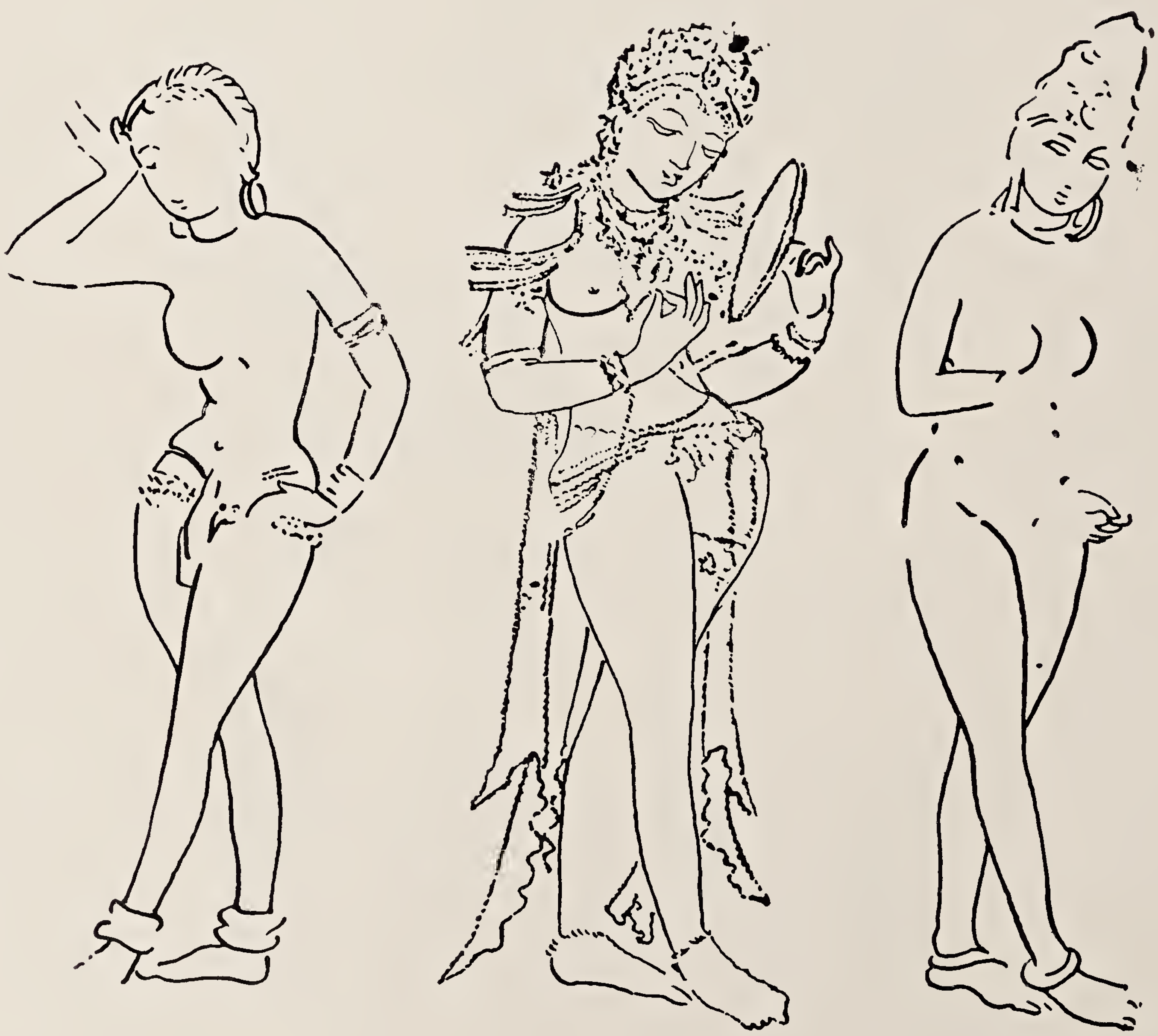


Fig. 5. Echoes of Amarāvatī in Ajaṇṭā and Mahābalipuram.
Left to right: Amarāvatī, Ajaṇṭā and Mahābalipuram

Maṅgaḷeśa was a great patron of art and created some magnificent caves and temples in his capital, Bādāmī. The loveliest of them all is Cave 4, i.e. the Vaishṇava cave as it is called. This cave is dedicated to Vishṇu mentioning Maṅgaḷeśa as the Bhāgavata devoted to Vishṇu. The inscription is very valuable, like an earlier inscription at Ajaṇṭā, to understand the art and art traditions in this period and in this cave. It describes the cave temple as 'exceeding the height of two men and of wonderful workmanship, extensive in its major and minor parts, ceiling and sides all extremely beautiful to behold: *paramabhāgavato layanamahāvishṇugṛiham atidvaimānushyakam atyadbhutakarmavirachitam bhūmibhāgopabhāgopariparyantātiśayadarśanīyatamam kṛitvā* (*Indian Antiquary* 6, p. 363; 10, p. 58). It was the usual thing to paint the building in its entirety. The ceiling and walls were both beautifully decorated. That is why fragments of paintings have been found even in the upper cells of the Dharmarāja ratha at Mahābalipuram and in other Pallava cave temples like the Kailāsanātha Temple at Kāñchīpuram. This cave temple at Bādāmī had similar decorative treatment. The description in the inscription leaves no doubt that the painters of Maṅgaḷeśa's court painted and made beautiful both the ceiling and the walls. Though most of these paintings have been lost during the centuries, it is fortunate that surviving fragments have been discovered, and the credit of the discovery on the heavily vaulted roof of the front *maṇḍapa* goes to Dr. Stella Kramrisch. The paintings at Bādāmī are among the earliest in Brahmanical temples, just as paintings at Ajaṇṭā and Sittannavāśal are among the earliest Buddhist and Jaina murals respectively.

Maṅgaḷeśa's patronage of art is clear in the fragments of paintings at Bādāmī. A large panel, of which a part only is illustrated here, represents a scene in the palace where the central figure is witnessing music and dance. A group of visitors from the balcony also watches the scene. The principal figure seated on a couch with a foot resting on the footstool is so obliterated that the details are difficult to make out. The beautiful torso of the figure and the hands can however be distinguished. The crown, *makuṭa,* is preserved though the face is lost. The beautiful necklace with lovely pendant tassels, is the usual Chāḷukya type. The sacred thread is composed of pearls, *muktā yajñopavīta.* At the feet of this princely figure are a number of seated noblemen, mostly damaged. Surrounding him are several damsels in attendance, some of them holding the fly whisks, *chāmaras.* To the left is the orchestra composed of musicians and two beautiful dancing figures—a male and a female. The scene is in a pillared hall provided with a screen or *yavanikā,* arranged to indicate further inner apartments of the palace. This may be identified as the scene of Indra in this magnificent palace of Vaijayanta, witnessing dance and music, the dance master being Bharata or Taṇḍu with Urvaśī as the main dancer.

In this context the next panel can be understood. This depicts a prince seated at ease in the *mahārājalīlā* pose with his right leg on the footstool and the left leg raised and placed on the seat, his left arm resting on his knee, his right hand in *tripatāka* attitude. There are several crowned princes seated on the ground to his right, attending on him and awaiting his orders, echoing Kālidāsa's verse: *nṛipatayas śataśo maruto yathā śatamakham tam akhaṇḍitapaurusham, Raghuvamśa* 9.13. Towards the farthest end is a woman dressed in a lower garment of the *āprapadīna* type that reaches the ankle and holding a staff *vetradaṇḍa.* She appears to be the usher or the *pratīhārī.* To the left of the picture is the queen attended by *prasādhikās* or attendants, one of whom is painting her feet with red *(Pl. I)* lac, *alaktaka.* The queen is seated on a low couch with rectangular back provided with cushions, chaurī bearers, *chāmaradhāriṇīs,* with their hair dressed either in *dhammilla* or *jaṭā* fashion, braided or plaited, attend on her and also on the prince. The queen is relaxed, her right leg touching the footstool, *pādapīṭha,* and the left raised on the seat itself. Ear-rings, *patrakuṇḍalas,* droop from her ear lobes. The *ananta,* armlet, entwines her arm.

The necklets and bracelets add charm to an already beautiful figure. Her hair is dressed in lovely *dhammilla* fashion and the ringlets of hair, *chikuras,* are visible as nestling on her forehead. She wears a striped *ardhoruka,* short garment covering the thighs. The prince is swarthy and the queen of the fair type, recalling Kālidāsa: *indīvaraśyāmatanur nṛiposau, tvam rochanāgauraśarīrayashṭiḥ, anyonyaśobhāparivṛiddaye vām yogas taḍittoydayor ivāstu, Raghuvamśa* 6. 65. 'The king is dark like a lily, you fair like musk; let you both unite like the cloud and lightning, enhancing your beauty.' This appears to be the portrait of Kīrtivarman, painted as pendant to Indra in all his glory, in his court, to suggest the close similarities between the king of heaven and the sovereign of the earth that Kālidāsa has so often suggested as in 'The thunderbolt of Indra in heaven and the bow and arrow of the king on earth sustain the two worlds': *āśamsante surayuvatayo baddhavairā hi daityair asyādhijye dhanushi vijayam pauruhūte cha vajre, Raghuvamśa* 9. 12. *Maṅgaḷeśa* had such great love and respect for his royal elder brother that he not only got his painting prepared, comparing him to Indra himself than which comparison no better compliment was possible, but also made over to him the entire merit of the offering of the cave, as recorded in the inscription here. It is this painting probably that inspired the portrait done by Narasiṁhavarman of his grandfather and father, Siṁhavishṇu and Mahendravarman with their names inscribed in the Varāha cave where the Varāha panel itself is inspired by the identical theme carved at Bādāmī.

The Pallavas, who ruled from Kāñchī a large kingdom that extended upto the Kṛishṇā valley in the north and up to Tiruchirāpaḷḷi on the Kaverī in the south, could even valiantly fight Samudragupta at the time of his *digvijaya.* Siṁhavishṇu in the sixth century was a great king who had matrimonial alliance with the Vishṇukuṇḍin king in the region of the Kṛishṇā, and it is to be remembered that Vishṇukuṇḍins were also matrimonially connected with the Vākāṭakas. Siṁhavishṇu's son Mahendravarman I, the daughter's son of the Vishṇukuṇḍin monarch Vikramahendra and named after his maternal grandfather, was so impressed with the rockcut cave in Mogalrājapuram created by his maternal grandfather, that he introduced this rockcut architecture in his own Tamil area for the first time. His famous inscription at Maṇḍagapaṭṭu is an eloquent testimony to his artistic imagination and the efflorescence of his enthusiasm for sculpture and painting, just as his musical inscription at Kuḍimiāmalai proclaims his musical talents. 'This temple for Brahmā, Iśvara and Vishṇu has been created by the curious-minded king without the use of brick, wood, metal or mortar: *etad anishṭakam adruman alauham asudham vichitrachittena, nirmāpitam nṛipena brahmeśvaravishṇulakshitāyatanam.* It is an interesting innovation, as structural temples of the usual materials mentioned were the order of the day, and this was so very new, particularly in this part of the country. It is no wonder that Mahendravarman, who was a master of several fine arts and literature, being himself the author of famous works of absorbing interest, like the burlesque *Mattavilāsa* and the *Bhagavadajjuka* bore such titles as *Vichitrachitta,* curious art-minded one: *Chitrakārapuli,* a tiger among painters; *Mattavilāsa,* exuberant in sport; *Chaityakārī,* temple builder and so forth. These titles themselves signify his artistic taste. He was an architect, engineer, poet and artist—all in one. His son, Narasiṁhavarman I, the greatest conqueror of his day, ranking with Puḷakeśi and Harsha, his two great contemporaries, created monuments which are even now regarded with wonder by connoisseurs. Towards the end of the seventh century, the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram, was constructed by another great Pallava king, Rājasiṁha, who was aided in this task by his artminded queen, Raṅgapatākā, whose name itself suggests how immersed in fine arts she was, being herself a great dancer and connoisseur of sculpture and painting. The rare surviving fragments in the monuments of this king give us a few

splendid examples of the Pallava phase of painting. Traces of line and colour in cave temples, as at Māmaṇḍur, indicate an earlier lost phase of Pallava painting.

In the sculptural Pallava temples of Panamalai and Kāñchīpuram there are fragments which give us a glimpse of the development of painting a few decades later than what we see at Māmaṇḍur. The beautiful goddess with a crown on her head and an umbrella held *(Pl. II)* over her, from Panamalai, is Pārvatī watching the dance of her Lord Śiva. She stands gracefully with one leg bent in exactly the same manner as the princess is represented in sculpture of the second century at Amarāvatī and in Vākāṭaka painting of the fifth century at Ajaṇṭā. It is this favourite pose that continues even into later times, and one of the masterpieces of sculpture of the Choḷa period at Tribhuvanam is a magnificent *surasundarī*, celestial nymph, in an identical posture. Pārvatī at Panamalai, in this painting, is very close to a large painting of Śiva dancing in the *lalāṭatilaka*, foot touching forehead pose, multi-armed, exactly as he is portrayed in relief to the right of the entrance of the main cell of the Kailāsanātha shrine at Kāñchīpuram. Unfortunately, the form in this painting is almost completely faded out, though with difficulty it can be made out by close examination. This painting along with the charming remains of a princely figure, and a Somāskanda, *(Fig. 6)* from two of the cloistered cells surrounding the courtyard of the Kailāsanātha temple at



Fig. 6. Somāskanda, 7th century, Pallava, Kāñchipuram

Kāñchīpuram, illustrate the painter's art in Rājasiṁha's time. The paintings were the discovery of Jouveau Dubreuil, who had earlier noticed such remains in Sittannavāśal. There are other fragments like a beautiful Pallava face of Śiva in the eleventh cell in the Kailāsanātha temple, fragments of *kuṇḍalas* on the ear and the *yajñopavīta* on the shoulder, a similar fragment in cell number 23, a beautiful line drawing in red of a *mahāpurusha* wearing a crown (*kirīṭa*) in cell number 34, a colourful painting of a four-armed deity in cell number 46, but the most important painting here though only a drawing in red as all the colour has vanished is one representing Somāskanda on the back wall of cell number 41. Though there is little of painting left here, yet the vermilion aureole around the child's head suggests the intention of the painter in use of colour. Though fragmentary, the painting representing Somāskanda, indicates the wonderful flow of the lines composing the figures of seated Śiva and Pārvatī, with baby Skanda in the centre and a *gaṇa*, follower of Śiva, on one side at his feet, and a charming attendant of Pārvatī beside her, at the edge of her seat. It is a lovely theme of fond parents and frolicsome child, of the ideal mates and the object of their love, of the philosophy of affection which, though lavished on the off-spring, increases a thousandfold. Their mutual love intense like that of the *chakravāka* birds, though shared by their only child, increased mutually a thousandfold: *rathāṅga-nāmnor iva bhāvabandhanam babhūva yat prema parasparāśrayam, vibhaktam apyekasutena tat tayoḥ parasparasyopari paryachīyata. Raghuvamśa* 3. 24. The *yajñopavīta* flowing in a curve and hanging tassels is matched only by the elaborate girdle and pleasing folds of the silken garments. The arrangement of jewellery is most pleasing. Baby Skanda is a noble representation of the age of innocence. The mother of the pretty child is a painter's dream, a marvel of brush-work, a delicate subject treated tenderly, seated on a couch, with her right leg on her seat, the left hanging down to rest on a cushioned footstool which is lost. Her full breasts, the attenuated waist and the broad hips supply a fullness to the form that idealises feminine grace. The elaborate girdle with its multiple tassels flowing down the sides of the couch, like a tiny silver streamlet descending in little cascades, is a piece of work of which any master should be proud. There is also a fragment of painting depicting a *kinnara* and *kinnarī*, half man, half bird, as celestial musicians, which can rank with any of the best of this type at Ajaṇṭā.

The early Pāṇḍyas have had a long history in which a fascinating episode is the conversion of Arikesari Parāṅkuśa by the baby saint Tirujñānasambanda. This Pāṇḍya king with a zeal of a new convert and with the enthusiastic support of his queen encouraged his new faith in every way, including the building of temples. The Pāṇḍyas had matrimonial alliance with the Pallavas as in the case of Kochaḍayan, the father of Māravarman Rājasiṁha. The aesthetic taste of a princess of the Pallava line, no doubt, also had influence, for artistic taste seems inborn in the family. Raṅgapatākā, the queen of Pallava Rājasiṁha, associated herself with her husband in the construction of the lovely temples at Kāñchīpuram. It is no wonder therefore that in such proximity to the Pallava country, with the Chera power almost eclipsed at the time, the Pāṇḍyas adopted Pallava art ideas in architecture and sculpture and also in painting.

In the Tirumalaipuram cave temple one of the earliest Pāṇḍyan caves, also discovered by Professor Jouveau Dubreuil, there are fragments of paintings portraying birds and flowers specially lotus in bud and bloom. A painting of the *Śivagaṇa* in sinuous lines, richly executed, bearded men in the company of women, probably rishis engaged in amorous sports, as Śrī Harsha has elaborately described the themes on the walls of the palace of Nala in his *Naishadhīyacharita*.

In the Sittannavāśal cave, there are two layers of paintings, an earlier and a later, as also inscription of the ninth century relating to addition and innovation to the cave temple

in the early Pāṇḍyan period. It is thus clear that what were originally taken to be Pallava paintings of the time of Mahendravarman are actually Pāṇḍyan and of the ninth century. The cave temple is no doubt Pallava and a portion of the ceiling originally painted contemporary. But in this later series, there are some lovely panels, figures like the famous prince *(Fig. 7)* and princess with a monk before them, and the two marvellous dancers, as well as the pool filled with flowers, fishes, ducks, a buffalo and elephant, and lotus-gatherers, are all Pāṇḍyan paintings of great elegance, revealing the craftsmanship of the painter. The inscription in Tamil verse near the southern end of the facade mentions a Jaina Āchārya, Iḷan Gautaman, hailing from Madurai, who renovated and embellished the *ardhamaṇḍapa,* intermediary hall, and added a *mukhamaṇḍapa,* front hall. The figure of the dancer with the left hand in *(Fig. 8)* the *daṇḍa,* straight like a rod posture, and the other with the fingers composing the *patāka,* flag, with the face slightly tilted, and the eyes turned in that direction, is as effective as in the case of the Naṭarāja, in the usual *bhujaṅgatrāsita,* scared by snake pose.



Fig. 7. Royal portrait, Early Pāṇḍya, 9th century, Sittannavāśal

The influence of Pallava and Pāṇḍya art is obvious in the Chera country and in the Koṅgu area which was included in the kingdom of the Cheras. Chera rockcut caves as at Kaviyur and Tiruvaḷḷara, recall earlier Pallava ones like those at Māmaṇḍur, Pallāvaram, Sīyamaṅgalam, Tiruchirāpaḷḷi, Mahendravāḍi, etc. The beautiful face in classical style which is practically all that is left of paintings once adorning the cave temple at Tirunandikkarai of about the eighth century represents the early phase of Chera art. This face can well be compared for study with the fragment of painting representing a princely figure from cell number 34 of the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchī to which it bears a striking resemblance. The outline of a painted lion, also in this cave, depicts the face of the animal as very like the typical Rājasiṁha lions in Pallava art.

By the middle of the eighth century, the power of the Western Chāḷukyas was eclipsed by the Rāshṭrakūṭas under Dantidurga. It was Krishṇa I, who succeeded his short-lived nephew, and who was a remarkable ruler, that fashioned a unique monument in the Deccan, the Kailāsa temple at Ellora which was almost a wonder creation. The beauty of this monument has been graphically described in the Baroḍa grant of Karka Survarṇavarsha: "Seeing this wonderful temple on the mountain of Elāpura, the astonished immortals, travelling in celestial cars always take much thought: 'This is surely the abode of Svayambhū Śiva and not an artificially made (building). Has ever greater beauty been seen ?' Verily even the architect who built it felt astonished, saying: "The utmost perseverance would fail to accomplish such a work again. Ah! how has it been achieved by me, and by reason of it the king was caused to praise his name."



Fig. 8. Dancer, Early Pāṇḍya, 9th century, Sittannavāśal

In this remarkable temple, the ceilings and walls were originally wonderfully painted and there are survivals. Again they were discovered by Professor Jouveau Dubreuil. The value of these paintings is great, in spite of their being fragments, as they continue a great and long tradition. Beautiful and clear in its contour, an elephant, amidst a lotus pool in gorgeous colour, only partially faded, is as lively as some of the other figure drawings and paintings like Naṭarāja or Liṅgodbhava. The twinkle in the eye of the elephant that seems to make it live and move can never be missed.

Here is a Naṭarāja of the Chāḷukya type, multiarmed, painted beautifully and comparable to some of the finest early Chāḷukya Naṭarājas from Bādāmī and Paṭṭaḍakal. The Liṅgodbhava of the Kailāsa, is elaborate in three large cells at the back of the shrine in the cloistered enclosure around the court with Vishṇu in one, in another Brahmā, in the central one Śiva. This important theme is repeated here in a beautiful painting at Kailāsa. Though partially lost it shows Śiva emerging from the Liṅga with Brahmā and Vishṇu on either side. It is not only significant for its artistic excellence but also for the importance that the Liṅgodbhava form itself has at Ellora. Another, a painting of Lakshmīnārāyaṇa on Garuḍa, is also interesting. Here we note for the first time the peculiar eyes and the pointed nose in three quarter view, which latter, in developed form, becomes a distinguishing feature of the Western Indian paintings from Gujarat of the fourteenth-fifteenth century, and here we have also the beginnings of a style that culminates in the Vijayanagara period. Flying figures of Vidyādharas with their consorts, against trailing clouds forming *(Pl. III)* the background, musical figures and other themes, closely follow early Chāḷukya tradition. This is usually seen by comparing these figures with those from the Bādāmī caves of earlier date. The colour patterns, the flying celestials with their arrangement, one dark against the other fair, the *muktāyajñopavīta,* sacred thread of pearls of the male and the elaborate *dhammilla,* braid of the female figures, the flying attitudes, etc. are all incomparable. They are, as Kramrisch puts it, 'direct descendants of the flying figures of the Gaṅgā relief at Māmallapuram.'

In the Jaina cave, Indra Sabhā, at the farthest end, there are scenes illustrating Jaina texts and patterns including floral, animal and bird designs. There are to be dated, somewhat later by a century. The paintings of Gomaṭeśvara is interesting for comparison with the sculptural version here. But it is the Dikpāla group of Yama with his consort on a buffalo, preceded and followed by members of his retinue, presented in a band on the ceiling, that arrests our attention. It is interesting to compare it with similar theme in a Noḷamba sculpture from Hemāvatī or a slightly later Chāḷukya panel from Arāḷguppe. The treatment of clouds, the wide open eyes and the beginning of stylization are to be noted here.

The delicate treatment in painting as in sculpture of the later Pallava was continued during the earliest phase of the Choḷas, who came to power in the ninth century. Vijayālaya established himself in the area near Tañjāvur. Āditya and Parāntaka, son and grandson of Vijayālaya respectively, apart from moulding an empire, engaged themselves also in a great temple building activity. Parāntaka actually devoted himself to Śiva at Chidambaram and covered the pillared hall, *sabhā,* of Naṭarāja with gold. The son of Parāntaka, Gaṇḍarāditya, was not only a great warrior but a pious king who died on the battlefield. His devoted queen, widowed so early, is one of the most important historical personalities of South India, specially in Choḷa history, and noted for her generosity in establishing a great tradition of building and endowing temples. The greatest monument of the Choḷa period is the Rājarājeśvara temple at Tañjāvur now known as the Bṛihadīśvara temple. Rājarāja was a remarkable ruler, great in military triumph, in organisation of the empire, in pat-

ronage of art and literature and in religious tolerance. His intense devotion to Śiva is seen in his title *Śivapādaśekhara,* crown adorned by Śiva's feet, his taste for art in the epithet *Nityavinoda,* always rejoicing in art. The greatness of Rājarāja was nearly eclipsed by that of his greater son, Rājendra, who was a remarkable military genius. On his return from his successful campaign in the Gangetic area, he erected 'a liquid pillar of victory' in the form of a huge tank in his own new capital that he created and named Gaṅgaikoṇḍa-choḷapuram in honour of his triumph in bringing Ganges home, and a gigantic temple resembling the Bṛihadīśvara at Tañjāvur as a thanksgiving for Śiva. The only tribute that he required from the vanquished Northern powers was the water of the Ganges which they brought in plenty to fill this liquid pillar of victory.

Kulottuṅga II, son of Vikrama Choḷa II, whose title *Rajagambhīra* proclaims him 'majestic like a king' and is inscribed in the lovely *maṇḍapa* of the very temple he built at Dārāsuram will be remembered for this comparatively small but exquisitely carved and decorated beautiful temple that ranks in delicacy of work with the Mukteśvar in Bhubaneśvar. Kulottuṅga III was the last of the great Choḷa emperors. The imposing temple of Kaṁpa-hareśvara at Tribhuvanam is his creation.

Though there are fragments of early Choḷa paintings at Nārtāmalai, Malayaḍipaṭṭi and other places belonging to the earlier phase of Choḷa art, it is in the Bṛihadīśvara temple that there remains a great treasure of the art of the early Choḷa painters. The contemporary classics describe the glory of the paintings in the South, referring to *chitramaṇḍapas, chitraśālās, oviyanilayams* (picture halls) in temples and palaces; the *paripāḍal* mentions paintings on temple walls in the early Choḷa capital, Kaverīpūṁpaṭṭiṇam, but actual survivals from this period have not yet been discovered.

In the Vijayalaya Choḷīśvaram temple at Nārtāmalai, on the walls of the *ardhamaṇḍapa,* there is a painting of Kālī dancing and Gandharvas on the ceiling of the ante-chamber. There is another of Bhairava wearing a pleasing patterned bodice and a garland of skulls with a hound behind him against an artistic aureole of flames. The Jaina paintings at Tirumalai, though later in date than those of Nārtāmalai, are not altogether so degenerate as Smith would have them. They come midway between Choḷa and Vijayanagara style as they represent the last phase of Choḷa art. The groups of Kalpavāsi devas in the Lakshmīvara *maṇḍapa,* painted on the brick-walls of the outermost chamber, on the second floor, composing the earlier painted layer, are pleasing figures, though tending towards the late style, profusely bejewelled and with large open eyes. The second painted layer is nearer the Vijayanagara mode.

The discovery of Choḷa paintings around the main cell and the main cell in the Bṛihadīśvara temple by S. K. Govindaswami in 1930, was indeed a remarkable wonder, as it reveals a great phase of art, a regular picture gallery of early Choḷa paintings. There are here however two layers, one of the Nāyaka period on top, portions of which have fallen and reveal the other, the earlier one below, of fine Choḷa paintings.

Originally the entire wall and the ceiling were decorated with exquisite paintings by Rājarāja. The later renovations and additions have covered up or ruined the earlier ones. The Choḷa paintings now exposed are mainly on the western side. There is a huge panel
(Pl. IV) of Śiva as Yoga Dakshiṇāmūrti seated on a tiger skin, with a *yoga* band on his leg, across *(Fig. 9)*
his waist and right knee, watching the dance of the two *apsarasas* as a connoisseur. Śiva is not only a dancer and an exponent of dance but also a connoisseur. At Mahābalipuram there are Pallava sculptures showing him as a teacher of dance, instructing Taṇḍu in the violent dance *tāṇḍava* and in the delicate nuances of *lāsya* to Bharata, the sage who initiated

dance among the celestials. As Naṭarāja he dances as the supreme dancer. Here he is a connoisseur who watches and appreciates the dance of the best exponents. A dwarf gaṇa and Vishṇu play the drum and keep time and other celestials sound the drum, the hand-drum and the cymbals as they fly in the air to approach this grand spectacle, which, is witnessed by a few principal figures seated in the foreground. Below, Sundara and Cheramān *(Fig. 10)* are shown hurrying thither, on a horse and on an elephant respectively. The fingers of the dancer with the slender waist, the supple form, a slight tilt of the head, together with *(Fig. 11)* the graceful *mudrā* of the hand and the poise of the body forming beautiful *bhaṅgas,*



Fig. 9. Śiva as Yogadakshiṇāmūrti, Choḷa, 1000 A.D., Tañjāvūr

flexions, remind one of Kālidāsa's description of Mālavikā, 'her body is fashioned to suit the taste of the dancer': *chhando nartayitur yathaiva manasas ślishṭam tathāsyā vapuḥ, Mālavikāgnimitra.* The artist has been lavish in his gift of ornamentation and embellishment. The figures of the two dancing damsels as Śiva witnesses correspond exactly to the description of the daitya princess Mahallikā, with jewel on forehead and anklet on foot, joyous eyes, curly hair, pearly teeth and rounded breasts, appearing as though she were Dance itself fashioned by the Creator to create fresh modes of dance: *lalāṭatilakopetām chārunūpurapādikām, smeradṛishṭim vidhātraiva sṛishṭām nṛittamayīm iva, keśair arālair daśanaiś śikharair bibhratīm stanau, uromaṇḍalinau nṛittam sṛijatīm iva nūtanam, Kathāsaritasāgara.* It is interesting here to see how by the use of pun *karaṇas* like *lalāṭatilaka, nūprapādikā, uromaṇḍala, arāla, śikhara,* are all mentioned by name, but fitted wonderfully in double entendre in the verse. It was the age of dance and appreciation of the art, and the poet could enthusiastically so express himself. The various *guṇas,* merits and *alaṅkāras,* embellishments that constitute beautifying factors in the case of good looking persons in general and lovely maidens in particular, and which have been given in detail by Rājānaka Ruyyaka in two verses of his *Sahṛidayalīlā* 'form, complexion, brightness, nobility, gay abandon, charm, and auspiciousness are noteworthy qualities: jewels, golden attire, garlands and beauty aids are decoration: *rūpam varṇaḥ prabhā rāga ābhijātyam vilāsitā, lāvaṇyam lakshaṇam chhāyā saubhāgyam chetyamī guṇāḥ, ratnam hemāṁśuke mālyam maṇḍanadravyayojanā, prakīrṇam chetyalaṅkārās saptaivetā mayā matāḥ,* appear in visible form in these two figures, as well as the single dancer with her body twisted gracefully in *pṛishṭhasvastika,*



Fig. 10. Cheramān, Choḷa, 1000 A.D. Tañjāvūr

legs crossed and face turned artistically to look back. This dancer, with her braid filled with flowers, is a lovely dream of the painter, a dream never forgotten and continued with equal gusto in the subsequent age of the Vijayanagara emperors, where dance received an equally loving treatment, being valued highly, one of the queens of Kṛishṇadevarāya, herself being one of the greatest dancers of her age, who was raised to the rank of queen mainly because of the emperor's appreciation of dance.

The quaint little figure of the dwarf playing the part of the grotesque drummer nodding his head in wonder, answering the epithet *vismayalolitamauliḥ,* used ironically in the case of Bhaṭṭaputra in the *Kuṭṭanīmata,* as also the praise in sarcastic verse in which the knowledge of Bhaṭṭaputra in the texts on dance, music and playing of instruments like the drum is described as such as to put to shame even Nārada and others: *brahmokta-nāṭyaśāstre gīte murajādivādane chaiva, abhibhavati nāradādīn prāvīṇyam bhaṭṭaputrasya, Kuṭṭanīmata,* is probably here really answered by the proficiency of this gaṇa dwarf follower of Śiva. The motif of the gaṇa continues through the ages and there are innumerable lovely gaṇas in the temple as regular motif under the eves and elsewhere not only in the earlier periods but in the Vijayanagara and even the Nāyaka periods.



Fig. 11. Dancers, Choḷa, 1000 A.D., Tañjāvūr

The large figure of Naṭarāja dancing in the hall of Chidambaram and priests and devotees on one side has a royal figure, obviously Rājarāja and three of his queens with a large train of attendants adoring the Lord. A little beyond is Rājarāja with his guru Karuvur Devar on the other side of the wall beyond. The tradition of portrait painting and sculpture continues and in the Vijayanagara and particularly in the Nāyaka period portraits became a favourite to their taste. It is a strange coincidence that during the time of the Vijayanagara monarchs portraits were so much favoured in sculpture and painting and so much more in the former medium that they could be considered favourites equally so as they proved in the magnificent paintings in the court of Akbar and Jehāngir in the north, some of the most magnificent paintings illustrating the high watermark of portraiture in India were executed in the Moghul period. The portrait of Tirumala Nāyak and his queens and the metal image of Kṛishṇadevarāya and his royal consorts are famous.



Fig. 12. Faces of celestials, Choḷa, 1000 A.D., Tañjāvūr

The greatest masterpiece and the most remarkable painting in the Bṛihadīśvara temple *(Fig. 12)* is on the northern wall. The whole space is occupied by a gigantic figure of Tripurāntaka on a chariot driven by Brahmā. Śiva is shown with eight arms in the *ālīḍha* pose of a warrior overcoming the dreaded Asuras of the three castles, a host of whom fight with indomitable spirit, daunted by aught, little caring for the pleas and tears of their women, who cling to them in fear and deapair, vainly trying to dissuade them from fighting an impossible battle. If *rasa* expression is to be taken as the criterion by which great art has to be judged, it is here in abundance. The sentiment of heroism *vīra rasa* is clearly seen in the Tripurāntaka face and form. The figures and attitude of the Rākshasas determined to fight Śiva and the wailing tear-stained faces of their women, clinging to them in despair, suggest an emotion of pity, *karuṇa* and terror, *raudra* : Śiva as Dakshiṇāmūrti, seated calm and serene, is the mirror of peace, *śānta* ; the hands in *vismaya* of the dancer suggests the spirit of wonder *adbhuta* ; the dwarf Gaṇas, in comic attitude, playing the drum and keeping time, represent *hāsya*. The commingling of emotions is complete in the large Tripurāntaka panel which is a blend of *vīra, raudra* and *karuṇa*.

Chapter III

Immediate Sources

IT IS NOT AS if this great art of the Choḷas could go unnoticed in subsequent centuries, the Hoysaḷas, who inherited the tradition of the Chāḷukyas as well as the Choḷas, evolved a very beautiful and pleasing style of their own which, though a little over-ornamented and baroque, is very pleasing in its earlier phase of the twelfth century A.D. The Hoysaḷas with their ancient capital at Dorasamudra called Dvāravatīpura count their ancestor as Saḷa. The greatest of this family was undoubtedly Vishṇuvardhana who, originally Jaina, was converted to Hinduism by Rāmānuja in the twelfth century and, as his enthusiastic disciple, Vishṇuvardhana built beautiful temples and embellished them with the finest art of the period. The temple at Belur is a gem of Hoysaḷa art. Here, on a carved lithic screen, is a beautiful portrait of the king with his queen Śāntalā, distinguished connoisseur of art, dance and literature, seated beside him. He was most tolerant in his outlook. His wife Śāntalā, his minister and generals like Gaṅgarāja and Hulli Daṇḍanāyaka, as Jainas, created beautiful Jaina temples as well. With all the sculptural wealth of the Hoysaḷas representing their architecture and sculpture, no example of the painter's art had been discovered till recently. No murals have been noticed. Fortunately, however it has been found that there are specimens of paintings of the best period of Hoysaḷa art preserved in Moodbidri. These are painted on palm leaf manuscripts composing commentaries of Vīrasena known as *Dhavalā* and *Jayadhavalā* and *Mahādhavalā* or *Mahābandha* of the original text of *Shaṭkhaṇḍāgama,* and belong to the Digaṁbara tradition. My attention to these was drawn by my esteemed friend, late Shri Chhotelal Jain and were received for exhibition in the National Museum exhibition in 1964 and photographed in colour. These manuscripts fortunately have been well taken care of. By their palaeography, clearly of the Hoysaḷa period, and closely resembling the lithic as well as the copper plate inscriptions of Vishṇuvardhana's time, they have survived, with their paintings of quality in bright colour, to give us an

excellent idea of the art of the Hoysaḷa painter. It is interesting to compare not only the working in these manuscripts, with the letters composing the flowery lines in the metal plates from the Belur temple but also figures with contemporary sculptural idiom as these paintings are to be attributed to the time of Vishṇuvardhana and his wife Śāntalā, who was so devoted to Jainism. The palm leaves are unusually large.

The paintings are exquisitely done and the beauty of the letters suit the painting so well in their treatment and delicacy. There is a soft tone reducing all effect of contrast in colours. The outlines are drawn in very pleasing proportions. The Dhavalā is dated 1113. There are here representations of Yakshīs, Yakshas and other attendant figures of the Tīrthaṅkaras themselves, like standing or seated Mahāvīra, Pārśvanātha flanked by Dharaṇendra and Padmāvatī and Śrutadevī, Bāhubali flanked by his sisters, and again Śrutadevī, Supārśvanātha and Yakshiṇī Ambikā, Pārśvanātha and Mātaṅga Yaksha, Yaksha Ajita and Mahāmānasī, all of them exquisitely done and in bright colours and pleasing workmanship.

The Kākatīyas of Wāraṅgal, who were originally also feudatories of the Western Chāḷukyas and contemporaries of the Hoysaḷas, known so well by their great monuments at Wāraṅgal, Pālampeṭ, Hanamkoṇḍa, Tripurāntakam, Mācharla and other places, have unfortunately very little left in the form of painting in their area and of their inspiration. Fortunately, however, there is an *Amṛitamanthana* scene in the temple at Pillalamaṟṟi which not only illustrates the popularity of the theme, which has had frequent representations from the time of the Guptas, as it appears on the lintel at Udayagiri near Bhilsa in the fourth century, at Bādāmī in the sixth century, and in subsequent periods, as also at Mācharla in sculpture in a Kākatīya temple itself. This is among the only remains of a late medieval version in colour of this theme. It is interesting that it shows forms that approach the Vijayanagara norm, as the Kākatīyas were followed closely but briefly by the Reḍḍis and then by the Vijayanagara monarchs.

The Vijayanagara empire will ever remain in South Indian history a great chapter, a glorious one of which the Persian envoy Abdul Razaak, so impressed, has left a glowing account. This was during the time of Kṛishṇadevarāya in the first half of the fifteenth century. The empire was established in 1335 by Harihara, Kaṁpa and Bukka, sons of Saṅgama. It grew to be a dominant power in the South. The empire was established for the propagation of *dharma* and for the support of Hindu ethical ideals. Reinforced by the blessings of the great sage Vidyāraṇya, a new impetus was given to temple building, and in the large empire which embraced Āndhra, Karṇāṭa, Drāviḍa, Kerala and Mahārāshṭra and even touched Orissa, the Vijayanagara style of architecture, sculpture and painting was forged. It is interesting that Vijayanagara art is a fusion of several elements like Chāḷukya, Choḷa, Drāviḍa, Kerala, Karṇāṭa, and to an extent even flashes of Kaliṅga. It was a fusion of early Choḷa and late Pāṇḍyan tradition, combining to some extent in the Canarese and Telugu districts, a distinct pose to the Chāḷukyan traditions with its earlier distinct firm roots therein.

Harihara and his brother Bukka who succeeded him were able sovereigns that not only laid the foundations but also built up the future glory of the empire. Bukka's son Kumāra Kampana, who died prematurely, was a good warrior whose successful campaign against the Sultan of Madurai is commemorated by his poetic consort who wrote the Sanskrit poem *Mathurāvijaya*. Bukka's son Harihara II consolidated the kingdom in his rule for twenty-seven years. The great commentator of the *Vedas*, Sāyaṇa, brother of Mādhava, was his chief minister. Of his sons, Virūpāksha, Bukka II and Devarāya, it is the last who

ruled for some length of time, but his grandson Devarāya II, son of Vīra Vijaya Rāya, was a formidable monarch who firmly established himself, carried his arms even into Kerala, humbled the ruler of Quilon and instilled fear in even the Zamorin of Calicut, extending his sway over the whole of South India and even Ceylon. He could even overcome Kapileśvara Gajapati the ruler of Orissa and drive him from the Āndhra area of Rajahmundry occupied by him. Devarāya was a great scholar and poet himself as well as a connoisseur of literature and art. The celebrated poet of *Śṛiṅgāranaishadha, Paṇḍitārādhyacharitra* and *Krīḍābhirāmam,* a new type of drama known as *Vīthināṭaka,* Śrīnātha, was patronised not only by the Reḍḍis of Koṇḍavīdu but also by Devarāya himself who is reputed to have showered on him a downpour of gold, *kanakābhisheka.* He was a great builder and started the construction of one of the gems of Vijayanagara architecture, the Viṭṭhala at Hampi, which was continued and wonderfully embellished later by Kṛishṇadevarāya.

After a succession of several weak and short-lived titular monarchs, commencing with the incompetant son of Devarāya, Mallikārjuna, the empire itself was saved by Sāḷuva Narasiṁha, who was the most powerful nobleman, as he found Prauḍhadevarāya, who murdered his own brother to crown himself only to carouse and enslave himself to women, betraying his trust, took on himself the rulership of the empire that required his competence to save it from ruin. His loyal general Narasa Nāyaka tried his best to hold Sāḷuva Narasiṁha's sons in power after his demise, but as they proved worthless, one of them turning a parricide, he had no other option but to take on himself the rulership of the disintegrating empire.

It is his second son Kṛishṇadevarāya, who though an inheritor of a difficult kingdom to hold together, not only consolidated, but built up beyond all flights of imagination an empire that gave real glory to the entire period of Vijayanagara rule. As a great patron of art and literature, he is equally famous in his military glory and administrative excellence. At his court were the eight famous elephants of the quarters, *ashṭadiggajas,* as the poets were known. Being himself learned in Sanskrit and Telugu and a poet of distinction to boot, his *Jāmbavatīpariṇaya* in Sanskrit in no way less important than his Telugu poem *Āmuktamālyada,* he could appreciate and reward excellence in art and poetry, *vidushām satkṛitaye bahuśrutam* as Kālidāsa puts it, *Raghuvamśa* 8.31. Alasāni Peddanna, the grandfather of Telugu poetry as he was styled, author of *Manucharitra,* Nandi Timmanna, the composer of *Pārijātāpaharaṇa,* Dhūrjaṭi, the author of *Kālahastimāhātmya,* Tenāli Rāmakṛishṇa, the poet who composed *Pāṇḍuraṅgamāhātmya,* but who has gone down in the memory of posterity as the greatest wit at the royal court like another Birbal, Saṁkuśala Nṛisiṁhakavi, Mallana, Yellana, and Rāmabhadra are the renowned eight, in addition to other famous poets like Piṅgali Sūranna of *Rāghavapāṇḍavīya* fame, Bhaṭṭumūrti the composer of *Vasucharitra,* and others who are also famous indeed as gems of Kṛishṇadevarāya's court. Kṛishṇadevarāya, was the greatest ruler of the Vijayanagara dynasty, an unparalleled genius, better known as Rāya than Kṛishnadevarāya as he was the only Rāya to reckon with. He was not only an able statesman, ruler, warrior and scholar, but also a very great patron of every form of art, architecture, music, dance, every sphere of fine art. Himself a composer of several works in Telugu, his famous *Āmuktamālyada,* giving the story of Vishṇuchitta's daughter Āṇḍāḷ, the great devotee of Vishṇu, miraculously born, brought up with tender care, and by great good fortune, became, according to the legend, the consort of Raṅganātha himself, the flowers, that she wore to see how well they looked, being preferred by the Lord, to those untouched and specially offered to him, remains ever the most favoured of his works. This work by the emperor is believed to have been written at the behest of the Lord himself from the seven hills at Tirumalai as conveyed to him in a dream.

The story of how Kṛishṇadevarāya brought the image of Bālakṛishṇa from Udayagiri, after his triumph in his military campaign there, built a temple for it at Hampi, and installed it with great pomp, with a special issue of gold coins with the figure of Bālakṛishṇa imprinted on them, as narrated in the inscription on the walls of the temple itself, is indeed a confirmation of both the religious zeal and artistic taste of the king. The embellishment of the Viṭṭhalaswāmi temple that Kṛishṇadevarāya gave is however the most marvellous creation of his at Hampi. The story has it, that it was prepared for receiving the image of Kṛishṇa and Rukmiṇī from Paṇḍarpur, but was disapproved by the Lord who, graciously in accordance with the request of the tearful devotees of Paṇḍarpur, dissuaded in a dream Kṛishṇadevarāya from removing him from his original abode, though appreciating fully his devotion in creating a temple for him.

Kṛishṇadevarāya started his prolific creation of staggering monuments in the glory of the Lord, with additions in the form of a magnificent *gopura* to the Virūpāksha temple immediately after his coronation early in August 1509. A lithic portrait of his, apart from the metal one at Tirupati, is found in Chidambaram, in one of the four large outer *gopuras* that was raised by him there as in several other places. Almost every large *gopura* in the South is mistaken for a Rāyala *gopura* as quite a large number of them were built by Kṛishṇadevarāya himself. Like Aśoka who was reputed to be a builder of 84,000 *stūpas,* Kṛishṇadevarāya was credited with more *gopuras* than he could have completed; but the fact however remains that he was a patron of literature and art and both flourished in his reign. It should not be forgotten that as a patron of literature, he was also among the palanquin bearers that carried around in a procession the most famous poet of his time Alasāni Peddanna in appreciation of his poetry. What greater demonstration could there be by an emperor of his reverence for creative poets! The famous Portuguese traveller, Paez, who visited the emperor's capital has nothing but praise for Vijayanagara works of art. It is worth indeed quoting in his own words what he felt of the paintings and sculptures in the Vijayanagara realm during the time of Kṛishṇadevarāya.

> 'You must know that on entering that gate of which I have spoken, by which the ladies serving the king's wives make their exist when they came to the feast, opposite to it there is another of the same kind. Here they bade us stand still, and they counted us how many we were, and as they counted they admitted us one by one to a small courtyard with a smoothly plastered floor, and with very white walls around it. At the end of this courtyard, opposite this gate by which we entered, is another close to it on the left hand, and another which was closed; the door opposite belongs to the king's residence. At the entrance of this door outside are two images painted lifelike and drawn in their manner, which are these; the one on the right hand is of the father of the king, and the one on the left is of this king. The father was dark and a gentleman of fine form, stouter than the son is; they stand with all their apparel and such raiments as they wear or used to wear when alive. Afterwards, wishing to pass in at this door, they again counted us, and after they had finished counting us we entered a little house which contained what I shall now relate......... In this house there is a room with pillars of carved stone; this room is all of ivory, as well the chamber on the walls, from top to bottom, and the pillars of the cross-timber at the top had roses and flowers of lotuses all of ivory, and all well executed, so that there could not be better — it is so rich and beautiful that you would hardly find anywhere another such. On this same side is designed in painting all the ways of life of the men who have been here even down to the Portuguese, from which the king's wives can understand the manner in which each one lives in his own country,

even to the blind and the beggars. In this house, there are two thrones covered with gold, and a cot of silver with its curtains. Here I saw a little slab of green jasper, which is held for a great thing in this house.' (A Forgotten Empire, Robert Sewell, pp. 272-4).

The glory of the Vijayanagara empire continued during the time of Achyutarāya, brother of Kṛishṇadevarāya. It had a great revival owing to the military genius and valour of Aḷiya Rāmarāya, son-in-law of Kṛishṇadevarāya, who looked after the empire on behalf of the titular emperors. However, the combined forces of the Sultanate of the Deccan at the battle of Talikota, where the valour of Rāmarāya triumphed, and the army was on the point of victory, had suddenly a twist and turn, when the great commander descended from his elephant to distribute gold among soldiers in appreciation of their valiant fight; and the figure of the chief being no more seen on the elephant disheartened and so dispirited the army, that got confused in the notion that Rāmarāya was killed, that this army, that was pursuing the fleeing troops of the combined forces, now turned tail, with the former speeding behind them, and there was an unprecedented slaughter, the river Tuṅgabhadrā tinged with the blood of an ocean of troops slain. This weakened the great empire that was a bulwark against all incursions into the Deccan.

The large *gopuras* and *maṇḍapas* in temples in South India mark the Vijayanagara period. The *mandapas* in the temples of Vīrabhadra at Lepākshī, of Varadarāja at Kāñchīpuram, of Viṭṭhala at Hampi, of Jalakaṇṭheśvara at Vellore, of Raṅganātha at Śrīraṅgam are all, each one of them, magnificent sculptural triumphs of the Vijayanagara sculptor. The pillars with the rearing animals, horses or lions or the fancy monster *vyāla*, with elephantine trunk and lionine body, are all examples of the best and most vigorous in Vijayanagara sculpture. The equestrian figures were so imposing that they continued to be fashioned in miniature in wood as decorative bracket figures in domestic architecture in opulent homes till almost the end of the eighteenth century.

The Vijayanagara empire represents the last great phase of South Indian history and culture. Painting, like every other art, was encouraged during this period. There are innumerable temples all over South India with paintings representing this period. There are fragments at Anegundi, near Hampi, in the temples at Tāḍpatri, Kāñchīpuram, Tirupparuttikuṇṛam, Kālahasti, Tirūpati, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, Chidambaram, Tiruvārur, Tiruvalañjuḷi, Tiruviḷimaḷalai, Kumbakoṇam, Śrīraṅgam, Tiruveḷḷarai, Madurai, Tiruppuḍaimarudur, and other places belonging to the Vijayanagara and to the Nāyaka periods.

Chapter IV

The Beginnings: Early Phase of Vijayanagara Art

THE PAINTING OF THE early phase of the Vijayanagara empire can be seen in the *Sangītamaṇḍapa* of the Vardhamāna temple at Tirupparuttikuṇṛam. They may be fragments, but yet they are most interesting, not only because their themes portray important episodes pertaining to Jaina legend, but also because of the special place they occupy in the study of the development of painting during the age of the Vijayanagara monarchs. This temple was built by Irugappa, the minister and general of Bukkarāya II towards the end of the fourteenth century. Irugappa was a devoted follower of the Jaina faith. Naturally the themes chosen for depiction here are from the life of Vardhamāna, the favourite one among the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras. The nativity scene in the story of this Tīrthaṅkara presents his mother, Priyakāminī, in labour. One cannot but recall similar representations of childbirth presented a couple of centuries later, both at Chidaṁbaram, in a Nāyaka series in temples, and palaces as in Maṭṭāñcheri in a series of paintings representing scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* where the queens of Daśaratha are similarly depicted but also in the long wooden frieze of exquisite workmanship from under the eaves of a temple at Quilon now in the Madras Museum. The bath and ceremony of anointing the child by Saudharmendra, the Jaina lord of the celestials, corresponding to Indra of the Brahmanical pantheon, accompanied by his wife Śachī, is painted with elegance and is quite typical in every respect of the form and deportment, ornamentation and decoration of the period. In this episode, there is always presented the dance of Saudharmendra before Vardhamāna with the legs crossed in *pādasvastika* and this specially shown here. We may recall here as an interesting factor how Indra is closely associated with dance, from the earlier Vedic times,

and Śiva Naṭarāja as the supreme dancer combines in himself Indra's aspect of dance with some other attributes.

In the Virupaksha temple at the capital of the empire, the ceiling of the large front *maṇḍapa* has a magnificent series of paintings. Here there is a very important *Viddhachitra* or portrait painting, a masterpiece of art, representing Vidyāraṇya the great spiritual master, who was responsible for the building up of the Vijayanagara empire in its earliest stages. Vidyāraṇya, lit. forest of Learning, was the spiritual preceptor of the earliest Vijayanagara monarchs, and author of *Jīvanmuktiviveka* and the famous *Vedāntapañchadaśī* one of the most popular philosophical treatieses of the Advaita system of philosophy. Vidyāraṇya's blessings bore ample fruit when Sāyana the minister of Harihara II expounded the intricate meaning of the four *Vedas*, as Sāyana's commentary of the *Ṛigveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda* and *Atharvaveda* are famous. There have been earlier commentaries on the *Veda* like Venkaṭa Mādhava's *Ṛigarthadīpika* written during the time of the early Choḷa king Parāntaka, but Sāyana's has ever remained the most popular. Vidyāraṇya will long be remembered as the greatest pontiff at Śṛiṅgeri of the seat of Śaṅkara who established his monasteries in different places in India with his order of several monks to propagate Advaita that he so lovingly taught in his short span of life of thirtytwo years. Vidyāraṇya's name is perpetuated in the name Vidyānagara for Ānugundi. This portrait of Vidyāraṇya in a painting ranks in importance with the portrait of Śaṅkara himself, who lived in the eighth century, and who has been immortalised in a portrait of his as a young boy of twelve, seated with hands clasped by the side of Vyāsa to the right of a niche enshrining Dakshiṇāmūrti in a miniature Pallava temple at Kāñchīpuram. This long procession in the painting with Vidyā- *(Pl. V)* raṇya in a palanquin, preceded and followed by a large retinue, including elephants, camels, cavalry, trumpeters, banner-bearers and other hosts, is an impressive scene of the fourteenth century, recorded a century later. It may not be exactly of the time of Vidyāraṇya himself. It may be that it is later by half a century or more, but still the image of Vidyāraṇya was fresh, and it is not ruled out that the painter himself may have followed an earlier painting of Vidyāraṇya himself of his own date, which may have served as the model for this large mural painting which is from the ceiling of the pillared hall.

Beyond this are three magnificent groups.One of them depicts the famous archery test *(Pl. VI)* of Arjuna, hitting the fast moving piscine target, that won him the hand of Draupadī. The second is the stringing of the mighty bow of Śiva by Rāma, that brought him Sītā as his *(Pl. VII)* bride. This is concluded in the happy wedding of Rāma and his brothers with Sītā and the princesses of Janaka's family. Further up, is a row of panels giving the incarnations of *(Pl. VIII)* Vishṇu. Here are the representations of Śiva as Tripurāntaka and Madanāntaka. These are particularly interesting; as they are specially characteristic of a new concept and its execution, constituting, as it were, a Vijayanagara style, so different from early Pallava or Choḷa that present the theme in so different a way, as can be seen in the magnificent sculpture of *(Pl. XXXVIII)* Tripurāntaka at Ellora and Madanāntaka at Gaṅgaikoṇḍachoḷapuram and even at Dārāsuram a century later, when Madanāntaka though elaborated beyond what we see at Gaṅgaikoṇḍa- *(Pl. XXXIX)* choḷapuram is yet in the Choḷa norm set by the sculptor of Rājendra. But there is a moving away from the earlier tradition not only in this but in other Vijayanagara representations. However, the painter and sculptor of the Vijayanagara period did not entirely cut himself off from earlier traditions, as it is only where he chose, that he introduced certain artistic and iconographic innovations to suit his idea, taste and concept. The scene of Arjuna's *(Pl. XL)* archery, for instance, recalls identical sculptural representation in Hoysaḷa art. At Belur, the sculptural version of Arjuna's archery contest is almost exactly the same as we find in the painted ceiling of the pillared hall at Hampi. This clearly indicates how long lived are great traditions in popular themes in art as in literature.

While the Choḷa sculptor and painter have followed the classical tradition of representing deities as powerful youths ever young with no trace of moustache to proclaim them masculine, the Vijayanagara painter and sculptor have occasionally chosen, specially when the fury of the god is to be indicated or the importance of the celestial as a hero, to add the moustache to make him look valiant and fierce. Tripurāntaka in the Vijayanagara painting has been given this appendage which is unknown in earlier painting or sculpture. Here we have the beginning of a slight moving away from the classical tradition. The frown and knit brow of Tripurāntaka, the blazing eyes, no doubt depict the fury of the god. Even this is avoided, as it should be, in the smiling face of the same theme at Gaṅgaikoṇḍacholapuram; but Śiva here is in *ālīḍha* seated following the earlier Pallava tradition, though by the Choḷa times, the standing position had come into vogue. It is this standing position that continues in the Vijayanagara painting, and the *ālīḍha* pose is perfectly in unison with the concept of the time. But the bow that is shown in Choḷa painting is the normal slender bow, though it is Sumeru, and not almost a mountain in the hand of the great celestial. Earlier at Ellora in the Rāshṭrakūṭa sculpture, it is a graceful bow again, though the arrow is a flying figure of Vishṇu himself that turned into this deadly weapon. This follows the earlier Pallava tradition of half arrow and half celestial, Vishṇu tipping the arrow from waist half way on the shaft. In the Vijayanagara painting the arrow itself is made a very complicated one that includes several celestials in a row making it up, following, probably, on the inspiration of Sāyana's commentary on the text of the great *Yajurveda Taittrīya Saṁhitā,* where the episode of Rudra destroying the Tripuras as the only one who could handle this specially fashioned arrow composed of the highest celestials like Agni, Vishṇu and Vāyu could be managed. While the Tripuras in the Rāshṭrakūṭa tradition at Ellora are shown almost as in castles far and above towards which the arrow is aimed, here in front of the great warrior astride on his chariot, the three castles are shown as three circles. The great Asuras, the invincible demons, are shown fighting the arrow from within their castles. Vishṇu as Narasiṁha, the fiercest form and probably the most valiant, is in one, Vāyu in another, and Agni in yet another and the three celestials are finishing up the Tripuras. The horses are in stylistic fashion, Brahmā the charioteer is somewhat red which is the popular mode of representing *rajas* in a Vijayanagara painting, rather than the required golden glow, while Śiva as *sattva* is white. Even the bow string is interesting as here its expanse is beyond the mountain-like bow. In fact the mountain itself as a huge and towering peak is shown held by the lord as the bow, with the innumerable hoods of the snake Vāsuki, extending beyond the tip of the bow at the top. In characteristic and stylistic fashion, the wheels of the chariot of Tripurāntaka are shown as the sun and moon, eyes, nose and lips composing their face with the moustache specially added as should be done in a scene of fury.

On the other hand, Kāma in the Madanāntaka panel, who is riding a chariot drawn by parrots is interesting as just a youth of sixteen, powerful, and yet with only a sugarcane bow in his hand, accompanied by Rati, but without a trace of moustache. He fights Śiva who is shown as an ascetic, bearded and moustached, with long and thick locks of hair as *jaṭās* composing his *jaṭābhāra* all around him, his hands clasped in adoration, his legs crossed and bound by a *yogapaṭṭa* or ascetic band, his eyes flashing his ire for Madana, a mere look being enough to destroy him. The tragedy of Cupid burnt to ashes is wonderfully indicated by his bow and arrow, the bow of sweet soft sugarcane and the arrow a long row of sweet smelling tender flowers, the five famous missiles that Cupid ever uses for hitting lovers and driving them into a despair of passion. The anger of Śiva that blazed forth and turned him to cinder is not indicated as in early Choḷa sculpture by just the *tarjanī* of the hand,

the threatening attitude, which is the only indication of Śiva's anger, though the face itself is wreathed in smiles, is here a small but sufficiently distinct flame, approaching the fighting Cupid, who is almost seated not standing in the *ālīḍha* pose, almost approaching the earlier tradition of *ālīḍha*. The chariot of Cupid has to be really contrasted with the chariot of Tripurāntaka. The birds on their wings leading on the chariot have to be compared with the horses galloping in race again for Tripurāntaka. Nandī and Pārvatī stand aghast watching the tragedy with tears in their eyes. Pārvatī is accompanied by her maid. We know from the *Kumārasambhava* that she had a maid to look after her, a princess unaccustomed to penance so severe, and though dissuaded by her mother had insisted on taking to it, the accompanying attendant induced to wait on her, keep company and make her happy. She is also shown here. These two are specially noteworthy paintings of the fifteenth century from the ceiling of the same pillared hall. There are also Lokapālas the guardians of the quarters, shown in a row beyond, Indra on his elephant, Agni on his ram, Yama on his buffalo, Nirriti on his human mount, Varuṇa on a strange *makara,* which appears entirely changed in its form during the centuries of its transformation and appears almost a quadruped with the face of a tapir, Vāyu on his antelope, Kubera on a horse, and Iśāna on his bull. There is a corresponding row towards the other side showing the ten *avatāras* or incarnations of Vishṇu beginning with the fish as a merman, half fish and half human, as Kūrma, similarly of tortoise shape up to the waist, Varāha in therianthropomorphic form, Narasiṁha with the face tilted and looking almost defiant, Vāmana with the characteristic umbrella in his hand, that is specially significant in the age when such representation was greatly in vogue, and later became the feature ever to represent Vamana, Paraśurāma, Balarāma, and Kṛishṇa dancing, Kalki as equestrian. Two corner panels are adorned by an equestrian deity on one side and by a celestial mounted on elephant on the other. There are several other smaller panels which contain narrations of scenes from stories of the devotees of Śiva which are all most interesting. In one of these Nandī figures prominently in the vicinity of a Śivaliṅga that is worshipped devoutly by devotees. The sounding of a large *bherī* or the war drum is the theme of one of the panels. Asuras in action is in another. The ceiling of the Virūpāksha temple is one of the most magnificent and well preserved in the whole range of Vijayanagara painting. Vishṇu again as in this early Vijayanagara style, stands along with Lakshmī, and Brahmā as well as ṛishis with long beards are characteristically painted all in attendance on Śiva. There is here Tumburu, equinefaced with the lute in his hand. It is Nārada close to him, also with a lute and a celestial Vidyādhara famed for vocal music. Vishṇu in characteristic fashion wears a moustache, while Brahmā flourishes a beard on his four faces, three alone of which can be directly seen.

At Lepākshī in Anantapur district, there is a temple of considerable importance, with a whole series of paintings giving the best report on Vijayanagara paintings in the sixteenth century. Though now an insignificant spot, it was once a great centre of trade. Pilgrims flooded here to visit the temple of Vīrabhadra that was famous in the days of the Vijayanagara monarchs at Lepākshī. This temple was built by Virūpaṇṇa Nāyaka and Vīraṇṇa who on behalf of the emperors ruled the area. Virūpaṇṇa was the son of Nandilakkiseṭṭi of Penukoṇḍa and rose to a position where he made himself prominent and indispensable. He was specially devoted to Vīrabhadra the valiant deity chosen as a model by him as a warrior like Rājarāja who chose Tripurāntaka as his ideal. It is interesting here to see how the emperor that he was, Rājarāja, could think only in terms of the highest lord Tripurāntaka, himself the potent form of Śiva as the warrior par excellence, while a lesser ruler like Virūpaṇṇa could choose—of course the choice was his and entirely after his own predilection—Vīrabhadra, who was after all an emanation from Śiva and a lesser deity

compared to the great warrior that is Śiva as Tripurāntaka. Inscriptions of the time of Achyutarāya inscribed on the walls of the temple give particulars about the neighbourhood, the temple and the devoted brothers. The three shrines are mentioned in the inscriptions. A shrine of Śiva faces that of Vishṇu, while further up in the centre, is the sanctum of Vīrabhadra, the principal deity here. They thus form a triangle with a common *maṇḍapa* in the centre, of which the ceiling has a painting of an extraordinarily large figure of Vīrabhadra with his devotees, Virūpaṇṇa and Vīraṇṇa, beside him. This magnificent large panel probably the largest painting anywhere that represents Vīrabhadra, is even larger to an extent than the largest painting of Śiva anywhere in any temple, larger even than that of Tripurāntaka in the Bṛihadīśvara temple at Tañjāvur that covers the entire range of the wall on the northern side. (*Pl. IX*)

The most interesting and beautiful part of the building is undoubtedly the *maṇḍapa* adjoining the inner *gopura* and the rather narrow *ardhamaṇḍapa*. The *nāṭyamaṇḍapa* is a charming pillared hall with dancing figures, drummers and divine musicians carved on every pillar. Music and dance are suggested by the figure of Brahmā playing the drum, Tumburu thrumming the strings of the *vīṇā*, Nandikeśvara playing the *huḍukka*, the divine dance master sounding the cymbals, the nymph Rambhā dancing, and Śiva as the supreme dancer in the pleasant *bhujaṅgatrāsita* pose. This is a regular sculptural version of the hymn of the twilight *prodoshastuti* where a literary picture is graphically portrayed of all the celestials surrounding Śiva as he dances in the evening to the accompaniment of the drum by Vishnu, of the cymbals by Brahmā, the flute softly played by Indra, Lakshmī giving the vocal accompaniment, and Devī watching it all enthroned, though occasionally dancing in accompaniment with her lord. In the same *maṇḍapa* there are also elegant carvings of Gajāntaka, dancing Gaṇapati and Durgā.

The paintings in the temple at Lepākshī were noticed by A. H. Longhurst in 1912-13, but no serious attention was bestowed on them resulting in their deterioration by leakage and damp. The entire *nāṭyamaṇḍapa* was once painted in bright colours. The paintings here which are large-sized scenes from the *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Purāṇas* include a representation of baby Mukunda as Vatapatraśāyī, resting on a *pīpal* leaf, sucking the toe of his foot, raised to his mouth with both his hands *karāravindeva padāravindam mukhāravinde viniveśayantam, vaṭasya patrasya puṭe śayānam bālam mukundam manasā smarāmi*. 'I meditate on the baby Mukunda, reclining on a banyan leaf, reaching his foot soft as lotus, with his lotus-like hands, to his lotus-red lips', *Mukundamālā*, as the Chera royal poet



Fig. 13. Band of geese, Vijayanagara, 16th century, Lepākshī

saint Kulaśekhara puts it. The scenes of the marriage of Pārvatī, Dakshiṇāmūrti, Rāma's coronation, Arjuna shooting the moving piscine target, though drawn with skill and agreeable to the eye, are not comparable to those in the *ardhamaṇḍapa* here itself which are far superior in skill of execution and aesthetic feeling.

This series also includes the story of Arjuna's penance, for which, the popularity of the theme has provided the painter with excellent earlier versions of narration in text as well as in art, to enable him to create successive panels to narrate, beginning with Śiva seated at ease as *sukhāsana;* hunters and sages, Indra presenting a weapon to Arjuna; Śiva appearing as a hunter, accompanied by his spouse; the boar; the fight over it and the blessing Arjuna receives from Maheśa in the gift of a divine weapon. There is a graphic representation of Pārvatī's marriage, where many sages and gods like Vishṇu, Vāyu and Agni, appear as the principal guests. The toilet of Pārvatī before her marriage and the scene of Śiva playing chess with his wife, are indeed very interesting. It may be recalled that the toilet of Devī is such a favourite theme that it has been specially represented two centuries later in the palace at Maṭṭāñcheri in a late Chera series of drawings that could not be finally painted, but which, nevertheless, are magnificent as drawings. Her playing chess is such a favourite that in the Rameśvara cave at Ellora, the Vākāṭaka sculpture of the fifth century is probably the most marvellous masterpiece representing this theme. It has again been repeated several times in the Vākāṭaka and Rāshṭrakūṭa temples, at Elephaṇṭā also. The famous masterpiece from Ellora of the Vākāṭaka age showing Pārvatī triumph over Śiva in the game of chess certainly recalls the verse of Bāṇa *samuddīpitakandarpā kṛitagaurīprasādhanā, haralīleva no kasya vismayāya bṛihatkathā, Harshacharita* 1 comes to our mind in this context. It shows how a popular theme has an endless life and continues to reveal the triumph of the painter and sculptor of each school in representing it in accordance with the style of the period. This in itself is an interesting study as the connoisseur could notice, understand and appreciate the changing mind and creative spirit of the art-minded from time to time during the ages. Here we have also narration of the story of the calf run over by the car of the Choḷa prince and the cow claiming and getting justice meted out to her by the ruler whose name itself proclaims the ideals of justice, *Manunītikoṇḍa.* *(Pl. X)* The story has a special importance at Tiruvālur, in the Tañjāvur district, where a monolithic car and the calf below it represent the scene. This, and the story of Arjuna's penance, as very popular themes, are repeated in sculptural panels of the Śiva temple at Penukoṇḍa. Rāmachandran has a long paper on the Kirātārjunīya theme itself, bringing together representations of this episode by different sculptors of various schools during the different periods of Indian history. *(Pl. XLI)* A recent book by Nagaraja Rao on the same theme in Kaṇāṭaka itself shows how rich is the theme within even a limited area of the Karṇāṭaka state itself. Sculptures, paintings, even terracottas have magnificently immortalised this theme. This is one of the most important paintings in this Lepākshī temple.

There is also representation in painting of Virūpaṇṇa and Vīraṇṇa, with their retinue, receiving sacred ashes from the priests of their tutelary deity, Vīrabhadra. Their dress and especially the headgear, recalling that of Kṛishṇadevarāya with his queens in the bronze *(Pl. IX)* statue at Tirupati and the stone sculpture at Chidambaram, and that of Tirumalarāya in Tirupati, is most interesting. It is only the brothers as eminent chieftains, that are shown with this headgear, while the rest of the retinue wear other varieties of turban. When we recall the description of the special pair of portraits of Kṛishṇadevarāya and his father in one of the inner apartments of his palace and the other paintings in the ivory chamber seen and admired by Paez, we can understand how important portraiture was in the court of the Vijayanagara monarchs as in the court of Akbar who belonged nearly about to the same time.

The most important series of paintings here is from the ceiling of the *ardhamaṇḍapa,* rich in the presentation of various forms of Śiva. It starts with Śiva rising from the *liṅga* and assuring protection to devotees offering him worship, particularly the youth nearby, who, but for the absence of Yama with a noose to torment him, should be taken to be Mārkaṇḍeya. It may be the moment after Yama was repelled that is chosen by the artist for depiction. We may recall that Śiva as Mārkaṇḍeyānugrahamūrti has been very popular,



Fig. 14. Andhakāntaka Śiva, Vijayanagara, 16th century, Lepākshī

and there are specially sculptural representations in several temples, including the famous Kailāsa at Ellora, where it is graphically presented, Śiva arising out of the *liṅga* in almost *(Pl. XLII)* this fashion, except that it is an earlier version with a natural difference that is to be expected in an eighth century concept as against a sixteenth century depiction here. It is *(Pl. XI)* certainly Mārkaṇḍeya and Śiva as the lord bestowing grace, *anugrahamūrti*.

The next painting shows Śiva killing the demon of ignorance, whose dismal colour is in striking contrast to the lustrous white of the divine destroyer. Agitation in the one and calm in the other are obvious moods. The sages and devotees on either side adore *(Fig. 14)* Andhakāsurasamhāramūrti. Again it is interesting here to compare the earliest Vākāṭaka representation at Elephaṇṭā where a crown is held over Śiva to indicate that this is like his annihilation of the Tripuras, *tripurasamhāra*, a crowning achievement suggestive of darkness triumphed over by light as the highest. Sūrya, the god of light, in this aspect, appears in the second century B.C. itself at Bhājā, dispelling the huge demon of darkness shown below the solar car. Andhakāntaka becomes a stylised tame figure standing in *ālīḍha*, but yet fierce, with a peculiar beard on the cheeks in curls as *bhramarakas*, with his trident raised up piercing Andhakāsura. An example of this is a sculpture of the Gāhaḍavāla school of the twelfth century in the Sārnāth Museum. A still earlier one from Bhubaneśvar in Orissa, now in the Indian Museum, combines the concepts of Ardhakāntaka with Gajāntaka and Bhairava, a process that became certainly a favourite mode from Ellora itself, where it is observed in the Kailāsa for the first time. Here in the Vijayanagara sculpture, though in the Karṇāṭaka territory, where this form was a favourite in its triple aspect, and is even found mentioned in a Kannaḍa inscription, it is here a pure Andhaka representation without mixing up Bhairava and Gajāntaka aspects.

The divine teacher, seated on a hillock, under the sacred tree to expound the mystic *(Pl. XII)* depths of philosophic thought to sages, whose lives have been an example of untiring devotion to the study of the most profound problems of life, is shown with a serene face. The *yogapaṭṭa*, ascetic band, around his right leg, which rests on his left, the leisurely way in which the lower right arm comes over the knee, mark him as Yogadakshiṇāmūrti. Around him are a host of devotees adoring him. This panel of Dakshiṇāmūrti is superior to the similar one on the ceiling of the *Nāṭyamaṇḍapa*. In South India, it should be recalled that *(Pl. XIII)* Dakshiṇāmūrti in this aspect is a favourite. It is interesting again to compare almost a parent of this style in the Dakshiṇāmūrti which is found in Ellora in the Kailāsa temple itself, not to talk of this usual type that is found both in Pallava and Choḷa sculpture all over. It may be recalled that though Lakulīśa is favoured in the north, but also occurs at Ellora, it is not such a favourite as Dakshiṇāmūrti, which is the chosen form in the South for Śiva as a teacher.

The divine grace of the boon-conferring Lord is clear in a painting where he is shown *(Pl. XIV)* giving away one of his weapons to his devotees. Chaṇḍeśa receives with humility the axe that the deity kindly presents to him as the insignia of his office as the steward of his household, to which he is appointed. A *gaṇa* between the two figures, blowing a long bugle, announces the great gift to the devotees who throng to see this event. The staff that the Brāhmaṇa boy, Vichāraśarma, used in his duties as a cowherd boy, turned miraculously into an axe, when, unknowingly he dealt a blow and cut off the legs of his father, who disturbed his bathing of the Śivaliṅga with the milk of the cows he tended, but unknowingly. In the *Śivabhaktavilāsa* it is given as by Śiva, *dattādhipatyam maddvāri śāśvatam testu*, 'you are given for ever command at the gate of my household'. Again, one of the greatest masterpieces of the sculpture in the south, Chaṇḍeśānugrahamūrti at *(Pl. XLIII)* Gaṅgaikoṇḍachoḷapuram, shows Śiva and Pārvatī seated at a higher elevation and the former winding a garland from his own *jaṭā* on the head of his beloved devotee Chaṇḍeśa

seated humbly at his feet. When we reach closer to it, we understand the heart of the sculptor. We can see that it is Rājendra that triumphed as emperor and victor, humbly seated facing Śiva almost in the place of Chaṇḍeśa and lovingly receiving the Lord's grace in the form of a great empire and unparalleled victory, the very laurels that he most coveted. This is a beautiful sculpture from the early Choḷa territory, where the sculptor has created his own form of it. This painting here is equally interesting and probably even more exciting, as again in this, with the bugler sounding the horn and the announcement made by a flare of trumpet that Chaṇḍeśa is made the steward for Śiva for ever is a rare concept wonderfully executed by the Vijayanagara painter.

The insignia of the door guardian's office is the axe that Chaṇḍeśa usually carries in every figure of his in stone or metal. The usual representations of Chaṇḍeśānugraha, of which the most famous is the sculpture from Gaṅgaikoṇḍachoḷapuram, show him as Śiva adorning his devotee's head with a garland of flowers as a mark of his grace, as may be seen in the charming frieze from Dārāsuram and other places. The iconographic works of importance from the South, the *Uttarakāraṇāgama*, *Pūrvakāraṇāgama* and *Śilparatna* concur in giving this description. The seventh century sculpture in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchīpuram, however, differs in the depiction of the Chaṇḍeśa episode, where the cutting of the legs of his father unknowingly by the boy who could brook no obstacles in his worship is chosen as the moment. But in this painting the painter has used his imagination so well and taken the liberty of a painter who is a Prajāpati or a Creator in his own right in his own oceanic expanse of art, like poets in literature, by depicting Śiva in an entirely new *anugraha* grace-conferring attitude; instead of his offering a flower garland, he offers the insignia of his office, the axe. This painting is not, as in sculpture, a seated figure of Śiva and Pārvatī, the former winding the garland on his devotee's head, but the whole group is standing and more alert and moving with a rare movement that makes the painting a masterpiece.

The next scene presents Bhikshāṭana, the lovely beggar, on his march for alms, attended
(Pl. XV) by a *gaṇa* who carries his bowl on his head. He begged for alms and created passion in the breasts of even the wives of Ṛishis, most austere women, who are shown offering him food in a state of mind where intense passion, created by his singularly perfect beauty of form, gets the better of the usual calm ascetic attitude. The pose of Bhikshāṭana is as noble and majestic as that of the dwarf is quaint and comical. The painter has fully succeeded in his expressive touches that enhance the obviously beautiful form of the ladies by infusing life, palpitating with passion, in their breasts. The calm serenity in Bhikshāṭana's general bearing reveals the ability of the painter, who could indicate such contrast. Even the deer jumps in admiration of the master's fascinating beauty. As one of the women empties a ladle of rice in the begging bowl, her mind is far from tranquil, and there are visible signs of her passion for the supremely beautiful beggar; the other woman is eagerly waiting to repeat what her companion has done. Again, it is interesting here to compare the Bhikshāṭana from one of the early Choḷa temples of Srīnivāsanallur or from the temple of similar date and of similar workmanship from the Nāgeśvaraswāmi at Kumbakoṇam. Śiva as Bhikshāṭana has been equally beautifully represented even in 100 A.D. in the Bṛihadīśvara temple at Tañjāvur where the main figure is in the niche and the women, offering him alms, on the walls of the niche. A whole group from the temple at Dārāsuram concentrates on this noble theme and the women with their garments slipping down their waist in their passion and the charm of their beauty is most wonderfully expressed, particularly in a pair from a long row of damsels, all assembled to feed the divine naked beggar. Removed from the temple at Dārāsuram, where it was originally, it is now in the Tañjāvur Art Gallery.

The three panels after this present in order Harihara, Śiva and Pārvatī approaching (Pl. XVI) what appears and probably may be Mohinī, and a group of celestials adoring Chandraśekhara and Pārvatī. The Lord as the Creator and Destroyer, both aspects in one form, is the theme of the painting of Harihara. The dark half of Vishnu's form makes a central line against the fair half of Śiva's body. Both of them show the marked features and characteristics of the respective deities. Again we should recall how Harihara is a favourite in the magnificent Pallava sculpture at Mahābalipuram. It again figures prominently in the Śaiva cave of Maṅgaḷeśa at Bādāmī, very elaborate and almost making it impossible for the consorts of these two deities to reconcile themselves each to a half share as they stand helpless on either side, even the mounts Nandī and Garuḍa feeling helpless.

The scene of Śiva as Kalyāṇasundara, with Pārvatī as his bride. There is a gathering (Pl. XVII) of sages and women. Brahmā officiates as priest. This may be compared with a similar one from the ceiling of the *Nāṭyamaṇḍapa*. In the Vijayanagara period, the marriage of Rāma and Sītā, Draupadī and Arjuna, Śiva and Pārvatī, all become a type with *kalpavṛiksha* tree in between the bride and groom assuring them the most pleasing married life with all that desire can wish for assured for them. Here as the manner in Vijayanagara tradition that follows the Choḷa, Vishṇu and Lakshmī give away their sister in marriage to (Pl. XLIV) Śiva, while at Elephaṇṭā, in the fifth century Vākāṭaka sculpture, which is a masterpiece, it is Himavān and Menā, the parents of Pārvatī, that give her away, shy and modest as she langorously extends her hand for *pāṇigrahaṇa* or shaking the hand in token of lifelong companionship in marriage. This is probably the most beautiful sculpture. Again it becomes a little more stylised in the Gurjara Pratīhāra sculpture from Rājasthān of the ninth century now in the National Museum and a similar one but with a larger group composed from the Bhārat Kalā Bhawan of the tenth century A.D. Kalyāṇasundara in metal with Vishṇu and Lakshmī giving her away to Śiva is a magnificent Choḷa bronze in the Tañjāvur Art Gallery. But near this is probably the Nāyaka sculpture of Devī as Mīnākshī marrying Śiva being giving away by Vishṇu, a monolithic pillar sculpture from the famous (Pl. XLV) temple of Mīnākshī-sundareśvara at Madurai. It is a Nāyaka carving following the present painting but even more inspiring.

The saviour of the three worlds in the warrior's *ālīḍha* attitude is shown in the next painting. He rides the strangest chariot to destroy the Tripuras, the earth with wheels (Pl. XVIII) composed of the sun and moon. The horses are the four *Vedas* and the charioteer is Brahmā. The weapon chosen by Śiva to destroy these formidable demons are not less significant, as he bends his bow, mount Sumeru, twangs the bowstring in the hiss of Vāsuki, and shoots the arrow, which shape Vishṇu himself assumed, for the destruction of the Tripuras. The picture shows the defeat of the Tripuras to the great admiration of the devotees around. Again the theme of the Tripuras, which has been the greatest favourite, and about which Kālidāsa himself has sung in the *Meghadūta* describing the Kinnarīs singing the glory of the theme of the greatest achievement of Śiva, the victory over the Tripuras, a story narrated as early as in the *Yajurveda* in the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, is wonderfully given at Ellora in the famous panel where Vishṇu speeds as the arrow in complete human form. Earlier in a late Pallava sculpture near the short temple at Mahābalipuram Śiva is seated at Tripurāri in a rare form with a bow and arrow in his hand, the latter, half Vishnu near the tip and half a shaft nearer the feathered end. In the Vijayanagara painting, the *ālīḍha* pose of Śiva is a forceful stride as he stands. In Pallava sculpture he is seated and is so repeated in the famous Choḷa painting, though in sculptures his is a majestic standing poise. In the eighth century Rāshṭrakūṭa panel also he stands as Tripurāri, and even a little earlier in the admirable carving from the Pāpanātha temple at Paṭṭadakal of Western Chāḷukya workmanship he stands and strides with a rare heroic touch. In all

these the theme is graphically portrayed. The flames that envelope the impregnable castles of the Tripuras, with darting tongues rape-like in ravishing approach towards the Asura damsels in vain avoiding them and on which the poet Amaruka has in his own fancy expressed and quoted by Dhanañjaya in his *Daśarūpaka* is certainly telling. May the fire from the arrow of Śiva burn out your sins, fire, that, like a repentent rogue of a lover, praying forgiving from his wronged beloved, was thrown out as it grasped the hands of the tear-filled lotus-eyed damsels of the Tripuras, beaten at an attempt of catching the hem of their garments, removed while grasping their braid, not even looked at out of sheer fear even when fallen at their feet, and shaken off as it embraced enveloping: *kshipto hastāvalagnaḥ prasabham abhihato 'pyādadāno' mśukāntam gṛihṇan keśeshvapāstas charaṇanipatito nekshitaḥ sambhrameṇa, āliṅgan yo'vadhūtas tripurayuvatibhiḥ sāśrunetrotpalābhiḥ kāmīvārdrāpa-*



Fig. 15. Gaṅgādhara, Vijayanagara, 16th century, Lepākshī

rādhas sa dahatu duritam śāmbhavo vas śarāgniḥ, Daśarūpaka 4. The seated form is so lovely that the Choḷa painter has chosen the seated *ālīḍha* form for Śiva, with knit brows and blazing eyes, in the monumental panel of Tripurāntaka, the largest painting in the Bṛihadīśvara temple of 1000 A.D., the Tripuras fighting equally terrifically is indeed magnificent. But here it is Śiva standing in *ālīdha* on his car, the normal type occurring in Vijayanagara sculpture, except that the sun and moon are shown as circular wheels composing the face of each with eyes, nose and lips introduced. The arrow is a series of gods all strung together and not Vishṇu alone. The mountain is almost shown as a tall mass of rock and the bowstring is a multi-hooded serpent, Vāsuki himself. The Vijayanagara type is a picture of the concept of the time and differs in many respects from the earlier form, though the tradition is followed, and followed meticulously, in at least iconographic detail of all that has to be shown in the matter of the detail of presentation.

Among the finest, if not the best, of the paintings here, is the panel showing Śiva as (*Fig. 15*) Gaṅgādhara, in his attitude of appearing Gaurī, as Gaurīprasādaka. It is a delicate theme rendered delicately. The whole composition of the picture does credit to the genius of (*Pl. XIX*) the painter. Here is a happy blend of action and repose, anger and calm; also of the straight line and the curved that make up the rhythmic outline of the composition in the single *samabhaṅga* of Pārvatī and the complex *tribhaṅga* of Śiva, that already appears within the boundary of *atibhaṅga*. Gaṅgā in the locks of Śiva angers Gaurī terribly, and her anger has to be appeased by her spouse. An effort at that difficult task is cleverly presented. The jealous anger of the *khaṇḍitā nāyikā*, forsaken sweetheart, and the eager submission and the appealing attitude of the *śaṭha nāyaka*, faithless lover, are well portrayed here. The later treatment of this iconographic form, of which this is a good example, is in accordance with texts like the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama* and *Śilparatna*, but such charm of small domestic squabbles is absent in the earlier representations by artists from the court of the Pallavas. The general description of Pārvatī, and a special feature about her face — *virahitānanā*, with the look of one 'forsaken', is clearly brought out in her visage.

In a very early representation at Elephaṇṭā, there is a disappointed look on the face of Devī who has yet not turned away her face though feeling sorrowful, in having a co-wife in the form of the triple-faced stream of Gaṅgā, though only her own sister, on the locks of Śiva as she descends. Śiva is yet unaware of Pārvatī's displeasure at this stage. But in the Gaṅgādhara at Koḍumbāḷur, probably the earliest Choḷa form, not only does Śiva hold out only a single *jaṭā* for Gaṅgā who starts with great pride to finally humbly descend on it with her hands clasped in adoration. Pārvatī is disappointed. In Māyūram in the beauti- (*Pl. XLVI*) ful Gaṅgādhara panel, Pārvatī definitely turns away her face. Gaṅgā as in the earliest Pallava Gaṅgādhara from Tiruchirāpaḷḷi is a humble mermaid present only on the locks and still imprisoned at Gaṅgaikoṇḍachoḷapuram. Śiva is definitely to make an effort to appease Devī by fondling on her breast. It is only at Ellora in the Kailāsa temple, there (*Pl. XLVII*) is the unique representation of Gaṅgāvisarjanamūrti releasing Gaṅgā as a stream. The Vijayanagara painter has very wisely and cleverly combined both and has made Pārvatī get all the more angry with her lord for providing her an unwanted co-wife and definitely turns her face quite away as Śiva tries to caress her on the chin, not merely fondling her on the breast as at Gaṅgikoṇḍachoḷapuram. But the reassurance of Śiva that he loves her more than Gaṅgā is vividly presented in the stream that is made to flow from his *jaṭās* with the fishes and conches and flowers mingled flowing down with the current, and a companion of Pārvatī helpfully pleads for Śiva and reassures her that she is his beloved who had already shared one half of his body in his Ardhanārīśvara form. The working of the mind of the artist and the sculptor during the ages is thus in a careful study not only revealing in its

import and aesthetic variation but also in the changing form of the mood itself. The coquettishness of Pārvatī being most obvious and evident, her incensed face as a *bhāminī* is brought out clearly in this Vijayanagara masterpiece of painting.

(*Pl. XX*) The next panel shows Naṭeśa in the *bhujaṅgatrāsita,* scared by a snake attitude. This is the most favoured and usually repeated form of Naṭarāja from the Choḷa period onwards of which the most magnificent is the one at Gaṅgaikoṇḍachoḷapuram where Kālī dancing with Śiva as well as Kāraikkālammaiyār playing the cymbals is vividly presented. The adjacent panel shows him as Vṛishabhārūḍha, riding the bull with Pārvatī beside him. (*Pl. XLVIII*) Nandī has one of his legs resting on the head of a dwarf. In the Vijayanagara period, this form of Vṛishabhārūḍha becomes a great favourite. While earlier in sculpture, there are excellent examples in stone and in metal of Vṛishbhāntika, Vṛishabhārūḍha riding the bull with Pārvatī is the more favoured form from the Vijayanagara period onwards. It is again interesting to compare that here Vṛishabhārūḍha Śiva faces the devotee riding the bull and not with the legs astride as seated usually on a steed, while in north Indian sculpture of Umā-Maheśvara, Śiva with Pārvatī seated in this manner, on the bull, whether couchant or standing, Śiva has Pārvatī behind him, both always astride as in Haihaya sculpture from the Cheḍi territory of which a beautiful example is from Bherāghāt. In Mahārāshṭra also these are met with, even during the Vijayanagara period, this type continued, as in metal representations usually abounding in miniatures. The leg of Nandī resting on the head of a dwarf is a very interesting feature as it is found only in the Vijayanagara representations of the theme. It is almost like Śiva placing his foot on Apasmāra's head in one of the seven Tripurāntaka forms, of which the finest early Choḷa one is from the Bṛihadīśvara temple at Tañjāvur and now in the Art Gallery there.

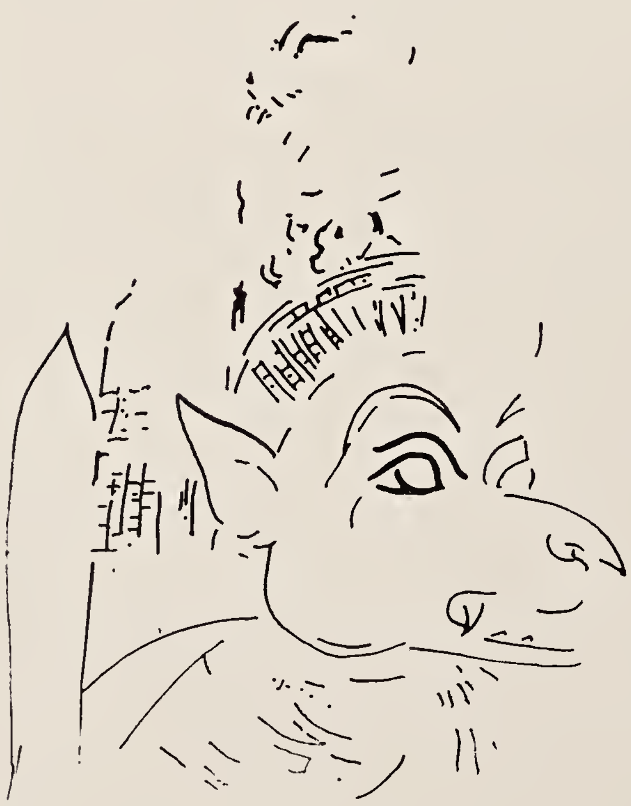


Fig. 16. Muchukunda's head, Vijayanagara, 16th century, Lepākshī



Fig. 17. Śiva's head, Vijayanagara, 16th century, Lepākshī

Chandraśekhara, Śiva standing moon-crested, is the next panel; and the last of this series is seated Pārvatī with a lily in her right hand, wearing *kuchabandha* (breast band), *kirīṭa makuta* (jewelled crown) and other adornments. (*Fig. 17*)

In the interior of the temple, on the dark and grimy walls of the shrine of Vīrabhadra, are the dim paintings of Śiva in different atitudes. One of the figures adorning Śiva is very interesting, as the face recalls that of Muchukunda, the monkey-faced king, who is painted over and over again in the temple at Tiruvālur. Muchukunda was among the greatest devotees of Śiva and is credited with bringing from heaven the five images of Tyāga-rāja (Somāskanda), the principal one among which is enshrined in Tiruvālur. That the story of the cow and her dead calf which is of great local interest at Tiruvālur, is specially depicted here in painting and at Penukoṇḍa in sculpture, suggests the possibility of this figure being Muchukunda. The stylized contour of the monkey's face, which is characteristic of the drawings of the animal in the Vijayanagara period, is noteworthy (see also pp. 49-50). (*Fig. 16*) (*Pl. XXI*)

The skill of the painter in design can be judged by the numerous drawings of scrolls and patterns, and particularly from the scroll of geese a whole length of which is represented with unerring draughtsmanship in the *ardhamaṇḍapa*. (*Fig. 13*)

Somewhat later in date is the Vishnu Temple at Somapālayam which, though, in a sad state of preservation, has yet in the *maṇḍapa*, adjoining the entrance to the shrine, paintings illustrating scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. They are elegantly done and can be compared very favourably with those from the *ardhamaṇḍapa at Lepākshī*. The scene where Rāma attacks and kills Tāḍakā is as full of action as the one presenting Daśaratha trying to appease his wife, Kaikeyī, whose mind is agitated on account of the evil gossip of Mantharā. Bows of princely figures, buglers and drummers and musicians are here painted with great mastery. (*Pl. XLIX*) (*Pl. L*)

In the paintings at Somapālayam, particularly in the royal figure of Daśaratha, the crown that is shown is the typical conical elongate jewel characteristic of the ruler of the age like Kṛishṇadevarāya and Achyutarāya so well known from their portraits and so typical. The dress, ornamentation, the arrangement of the braid, setting of the flowers, every detail meticulously follows the Vijayanagara stream.

The paintings at Uchhayappa *maṭha* at Anegundi fall in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The paintings here are interesting, both for the vigour with which they are drawn, and for the themes that reflect the spirit of the age. The sympathetic study of animals, like the squirrel, recall the age-long affinity of the art-minded with nature around them.

The running women as palanquin-bearers suggest an age when they were freely used for such a purpose in the royal harem. The woman, with a prince on her shoulders, in the carvings of pillars in Nāyaka *maṇḍapas* in the South illustrates this feature that continued in the subsequent decades and half century.

The interesting themes, similarly characteristic of the age, are the elephant and the horse, composed entirely of female bodies, and serving as the mount of Kāma and Rati, the god and goddess of Love. *Navanārīkuñjara* here made a *pañchanārīkuñjara*, elephant composed of five women, and the horse, is also a similarly grouped pattern. The popularity of the theme is seen in similar representations from one end of the empire to the other. At Moodbidiri there are wooden carvings and pillars illustrating the same theme. In Kāñchīpuram the theme is repeated and Vijayanagara art abounds in this representation.

The Temple of Varadarāja in Kāñchīpuram was once completely painted, but now there are only fragments left. In a small *maṇḍapa,* known as Andal *uñjal maṇḍapa,* the ceiling is covered with paintings on the sculptured surface. Here the sports of Kṛishṇa, like *Gopikāvastraharana,* stealing of the clothes of the gopīs by the mischievous little cowherd boy and *Kālīyamardana* the subjugation of the formidable snake Kālīya, are shown as also Vishṇu seated with his consorts. There are dancing figures, the Vijayanagara crest comprising the boar and dagger, Vidyādhara riders on palanquins composed of feminine figures, a theme popular in Vijayanagara art as already pointed out, along with similarly made up elephant and horse as vehicles of Rati and Manmatha. In the triangular strips at the corners, there are Garuḍas and Devas.

In the *maṇḍapa* opposite Narasiṁha's shrine, below that of Varadarāja, a band around a central square is painted on the ceiling. The theme of Rati and Manmatha, as the principal figures of the group, is repeated on all the four sides. Rati rides a parrot at the corner. The god of Love is either bending his sugarcane bow to shoot flowery arrows, or passionately caressing his consort or violently dancing with her, in every case, with a bevy of damsels, companions of Rati, all around. Though the colours have mostly disappeared, there yet is sufficient left of the outline to show vigorous drawing, sinuous line and animated movement. Red, yellow, green and black are easily made out, but most of the other colours have faded. These paintings can be dated towards the end of the sixteenth century.

In the main shrine of Varadarāja itself on the wall of the corridor, facing the back of the main shrine and, very close to a window, is a painting which is better preserved than the rest, that covers almost the entire wall area, though completely darkened by soot and ruined beyond recognition. Here is a presentation of *Garuḍavāhana* of Varadarāja, with a large temple umbrella held on either side, *chaurī and* other symbols of sovereignty. It is a delineation of the famous *Garuḍavāhana* festival for which this temple is very famous. There are two devotees shown — one, a king on an elephant, sounding cymbals and singing the glory of the Lord, and a humbler devotee, standing on the ground, in deep reverence. Close by is a panel presenting Vishṇu from Tiruvaḍandai, attended by his three consorts — Lakshmī, here named Tirumagal, Bhūdevī, styled Maṇmagal and Nīlādevī. The colour here is better preserved than on the rest of the wall and the outlines are clearer. The paintings may be dated in the seventeenth century and the workmanship is rather poor.

Recently the State Department of Archaeology at Madras, sighted the existence of early Vijayanagara paintings in the Śiva temple of Tiruviḷimaḷalai in Tañjāvur district. They are painted on the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa.* It is a famous temple, *pādalpeṟṟa sthalam,* one of the several shrines made famous by the devoted songs of Śaivite saints, principally Appar, Jñānasambandar, and Sundarar. The temple is thus a very early one as it is celebrated in the *Tevāram* hymns. The shrine had been renovated during Choḷa times but the paintings belong to the Vijayanagara period. Though the entire ceiling is painted, the central part being weathered and worn, the panels on either side being better preserved are to be specially noted.

One of the two panels shows Kṛishṇa dancing on the hoods of Kālīya, holding the tail (*Pl. XXII*) of the snake in his left hand, the right indicating his grace by its position in *abhaya,* boon-conferring attitude. The face is exquisitely charming. There are four feminine figures, two on either side, and a regular shower of flowers in appreciation of Kṛishṇa's subjugation of Kālīya. The figures are very charming and there can be no doubt that they should be assigned to the fifteenth century A.D. The immediately flanking figures are the consorts of Kṛishṇa, Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā. The other ones are like *Sālabhañjikās* standing under the *kalpa* creeper as attendant nymphs. Though it is too early for Kṛishṇa, the little boy who

subdued Kālīya, to have his consorts on either side that wedded him years later, it is just the convention of Kṛishṇa being shown with his consorts Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā as a favourite group in the South that accounts for this depiction in direct contrast to Kṛishṇa and Rādhā in the North. Even the details of the Southern convention are adhered to by the presence of these as mature consorts, one with the lotus and the other with the lily in the hand as they should hold, even up to the minute detail of the *kuchabandha*, breastband, for the senior consort Rukmiṇī to the right and the lack of it in the case of the one to the left, Satyabhāmā.

The second panel is another favourite theme, Kṛishṇa as Veṇugopāla playing the flute with his right leg crossed against the left. The weight of his body is resting on the left foot, *(Pl. XXIII)* the *tribhaṅga* or the tri-bend of Kṛishṇa making the figure very charming. The face is exquisite and the entire delineation is done with great charm. The *kalpa* tree, almost twining around, forms as it were an arch above the head as a half creeper and half tree, a combination of *kalpavṛiksha* and *kalpavallī* as a favoured mode in many Vijayanagara and Nāyaka representations of Venugopala. The rapt attention with which the cows and calves listen to the divine music, with the face turned towards the divine musician in a deep gaze, standing still without the least movement, is indeed a commentary on the melody of the celestial music. In some sculptures, particularly in a Nāyaka series in the Padmanābha temple at Trivandrum and several others of the seventeenth century, this theme is a favourite in the *maṇḍapa* near the entrance. The snake is shown close to the cow listening, and on its hoods or just below it, unafraid, would be seated the frog, for which a snake is a terror, all lost in the charm of celestial music, the presence of Kṛishṇa himself bringing together as friends even the most inveterate enemies. There are six gopīs, three on either side, some of them lost in wonder at such magnificent melody, the one closest to the right with her forefingers on her lip to suggest her feeling of 'how wonderful the song'. The others beside her are not less taken in by the same feeling. The three gopis to the left, two of them supporting the frailest among them in the centre, are indicated nude, to emphasise the other aspect of Kṛishṇa, his extraordinary beauty, which also like that of Rāma could ravish the hearts of even the males, not to talk of his beauty ravishing the minds of the feminine folk, as described in the *Rāmāyana*. They are so overcome by the beauty of Kṛishṇa that the garments have slipped off. We may recall how the garments slip off in the case of the wives of the *ṛishis*, *ṛishipatnīs*, in the Bhikshāṭana panels as they are allured by the fascinating form of the lovely nude mendicant lord that went abegging in the hermitages in Dārukāvana. Here again there is the rain of flowers magnificently shown. Even the borders for the panels are so exquisitely managed that the composite parts like the meandering stalk, buds and flowers with leaves, all stylistically done but charmingly, stand out so pleasing in execution.

In the centre of the ceiling there are exquisite figures of danseuses with a suggestion of great movement. It should be remembered that the Vijayanagara period was one of intense admiration of music and dance, and the delineation of *karaṇas* and *aṅgahāras* in dance, is a natural corollary. Ornamentation and draping in the case of all the figures has been done with great restraint and, judging from the charm of the paintings, it is impossible to date them beyond the early fifteenth century. They could be probably even earlier. It can be stated without the least trace of a doubt that these are slightly earlier than the paintings at Lepākshī which are definitely of the sixteenth century.

At Tribhuvanam, the two feminine sculptures, masterpieces of the later Choḷa period in about the thirteenth century, surely come to our mind, particularly the one near the *kalpa* creeper tree in that group, when we compare it with the two figures of damsels in the kālīya-Kṛishṇa panel as the painter has succeeded in creating two masterpieces like this.

In the Puṇḍarīkāksha temple at Tiruveḷḷarai in the vicinity of Śrīraṅgam, there are paintings that come very close to those at Lepākshī. Here, in the *chitra maṇḍapa,* so called because of its paintings, there are several decorative themes and attempts at pun in combining figures to make them interesting. It has been a favourite mode of several sculptors and painters even from very early centuries to combine three bodies against one head or even four. The deer at Ajaṇṭā with a single pair of antlers and face but with four bodies is a very interesting example. We have other examples, which have continued from the Gupta to the Vijayanagara and even Nāyaka periods, of the combination of the elephant and bull in a fusion that has made the theme famous as *Gajavṛishabha*; and even in philosophic literature there is mention of it in the sixteenth century by Appayya Dīkshita. Representations of this theme include one of them of the Gupta period at Deogarh, of the early Western Chāḷukyan at Bādāmī, Paṭṭadakal and Aihoḷe, Choḷa at Dārāsuram and Chidambaram, and even in Choḷa temples in Ceylon. It occurs also in Vijayanagara sculptural delineations. Here we have such combinations as of two fish with a single head. The bull and elephant in fusion in colour occurring in some temples of early Vijayanagara date, is repeated here also. There are interesting themes closen for depiction like the snake charmer playing the pipe and dancing the cobra with hoods spread out. Unafraid two monkeys listen to the music, may be as they are monkeys trained by the snake charmers as performing animals, as it had been a very early feature for snake charmers to carry along with them monkeys as well to entertain the spectators. At Amarāvatī, we have a representation in sculpture of a snake charmer with the monkey beside him. The famous milking scene at Mahābalipuram with the calf and the milkman is here almost repeated, as in India, the combination of cow and calf, particularly the feed of the calf at the milking hour, is the most interesting in any scene representing the cow. Baby Kṛishṇa drinking the milk straight from the udder of the cow, with two gopī damsels charmingly depicted watching the wonderful sight, is another interesting panel. Kālīya-Kṛishṇa is also a theme chosen for depiction. There is a series of paintings with particular stress on episodes from the *Rāmāyaṇa,* the meeting of Sugrīva with Rāma and Lakshmaṇa, Rāma's slaying of Vālī, after Sugrīva had satisfied himself about the valour of Rāma and his sure marksmanship. The shooting of the seven trees with a single arrow aimed at them all is indeed an interesting episode, narrated in this picture with a noteworthy feature which is a departure from the usual mode. The Tāla trees are not shown in a straight row but on the back of a moving snake, *bhujaṅga,* that is moving in zigzag fashion, and the trees also naturally move along with the reptile in the same manner, with the same single arrow shot by Rāma moving also in zigzag fashion to hit individually each one, a feat achieved and rightly considered the greatest prowess of a rare marksman. This is an innovation during the Vijayanagara period to enhance the concept of Rāma's prowess as an archer. While Arjuna could shoot the swirling piscine target that assured the hand of Draupadī, Rāma could go a step further to shoot with the same arrow seven trees moving in zigzag direction missing not even one. The friendship of Sugrīva and Rāma with fire as witness as is shown here is also repeated in a famous panel at Maṭṭāñcheri palace belonging to the seventeenth century. The death of Vālī with the arrow piercing his chest is a theme that has been a favourite from the time of the Guptas as seen at Deogarh, repeated at Paṭṭadakal in the Pāpanātha temple and in the Kailāsa temple at Ellora in a Rāshṭrakūṭa masterpiece. It occurs here as well. There is again a shower of flowers on Vālī almost to indicate Rāma reassuring him that having received punishment at his hands for his sin with Rumā he was free from it and become immaculate, having returned to his original pure state and could thus end his life in peace without a thought of any suffering in hell. The portrayal of Sugrīva's coronation is another very interesting scene. While crossing the ocean Hanumān had to encounter Surasā, the monstrous mother of the snakes with her mouth agape. How he expanded himself to try and baffle her to see how wide she could gape her

mouth, and how finally reducing himself into a tiny tot, he entered her mouth and escaped out of it in a trice, leaving her astonished at his skill and agility, as is here shown, is a favourite theme from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It may be recalled that at Maṭṭāñcheri, the painter has taken special pains to portray this very episode most graphically. The figures here, particularly the feminine ones, specially recall the very style at Lepākshī: the contour of the face, flower-bedecked braid, the form of the braid itself and the arrangement of the drapery and ornamentation, almost in every little detail. The face of the monkey here is not different from what we know at Lepākshī. These paintings come very close to the norm at Lepākshī and the date is proved to be the sixteenth century.

The Vijayanagara empire was so far-flung that, in the different parts composing it, a variety of modulation or variation in details of style, in the treatment of identical subjects, with, however, strong undercurrent of basic affinity, can be easily perceived. Thus as much as there is a distinct Vijayanagara influence in the Deccani Kalm of miniatures there is a reflection of Vijayanagara pictorial form and techniques even in Orissa, where the mighty arm of Kṛishṇadevarāya penetrated by his triumph over the Gajapati. If the paintings of the Cuḍḍapah school and those from Lepākshī, the forerunners of the great surviving art of Kalaṅkārī are influenced by Vijayanagara art, a whole series of *Gītagovinda* paintings from Orissa in the National Museum clearly indicates how forceful has been the influence of the Vijayanagara painter on the Orissan.

Chapter V

Late Phase

THE VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE SUFFERED a rude shock by the unfortunate turn of events at Taḷikoṭa, where the battle which was a sure victory for the army led by Rāmarāya, ultimately unfortunately was routed, and resulted in an unprecedented defeat. This made possible for the Nāyaka kings, generals and chieftains to assume importance and throw off even the nominal allegiance to a weak sovereign at the capital. Though for some time the Nāyaka kings were loyal to the Vijayanagara emperor, slowly the very helplessness of the sovereign, and the intrigues, many unpleasant, at the capital, made it impossible for the chieftains to exist, except by declaring their strength and independence. It may be recalled that even earlier, both Sāḷuva Narasiṁha and Tuḷuva Narasa Nāyaka had to assume rulership entirely because of the worthless imbecile nature of the titular kings on whose behalf the rule had to be carried on. Even this was made so difficult that there was no option but to save the empire only by these two able first noblemen of the land assuming power. It was almost the same case with the Nāyakas, who were kings in the South in different parts, experiencing a great difficulty by embarrassment caused by the incompetence and unwisdom of the titular monarchs. Among such kings in the South, the Nāyakas of Tañjāvur and of Madurai are very important. Tirumala Nāyaka of Madurai and Raghunātha Nāyaka of Tañjāvur are among the most famous, and they fostered in their courts art and literature, as did Vijayanagara sovereigns earlier. The Nāyaka phase of art in Madurai is as important as the Vijayanagara phase and some of the massive sculptures, with tremendous vitality and force, are probably the last flicker of a great art that was on the verge of collapse. Though great masterpieces of sculpture of the time of Tirumala Nāyaka exist in abundance such magnificent carvings have not only his portraits but also of themes like Rati on parrot, gypsy women, the Amazon carrying the prince on her shoulder, the robber chieftain, the hunter, *(Pl. XXIV)* groups like the marriage of Sundareśvara with Mīnakshī, Vishṇu and Lakshmī giving away

the bride, Śiva and Pārvatī on the bull as Vṛishabhārūḍha, dancing Śiva as Gajāntaka, musical *ṛishis* like Nārada and Tuṁburu and so forth. Such paintings of this period as are preserved are rather damaged, worked over or ruined, as here has been a regular feature and repainting walls, particularly the *Śivalīlās* on a whole wall of the corridor near the lotus tank where the original paintings were painted over and the originals lost. Among the oldest fragments of paintings here in the Mīnākshī Sundareśvara temple, the most noteworthy, of which there is still enough left reveal it as a fine painting of the period, is the marriage of Mīnakshī, a large panel, one of the many near the ceiling on the southern wall of the sanctum of Sundareśvara in the second *prākāra,* near the Naḍukaṭṭu *gopura.* It is unfortunate that in this painting of the marriage of the goddess there has been a little painting over; but still it is most interesting that a Nāyaka ruler and his ministers are shown on one side. This is not, however a solitary instance, as in this period of art, as even in the Bṛihadīśvara temple itself, in the Choḷa period, Rājarāja introduced himself as an ardent worshipper with his queens in the presence of Naṭarāja in Chidaṁbaram. Even in the Kāngrā paintings of Rāma's *durbār,* the Kāngrā ruler introduced himself as one of the devotees. There is thus one showing also Tulsīdās, who lived so much earlier, which along with the late ruler from the Chambā region with so many other devotees all put together, create a historical anachronism. In another, a painting of Bālakṛishṇa, of the Marāṭha school of early nineteenth century in the National Museum, crawling along with a butter pot, the last great ruler Sarfoji is introduced as a devotee at one end. Here again, the Nāyaka ruler Tirumala Nāyaka with his ministers is shown as favoured by the lord by allowing him to be one of the witnesses of the glorious marriage ceremony. This is a composition of several figures, witnesses of this glorious ceremony, men and women all in continuation of the Nāyaka ruler, here indicated as in earlier Pallava, Choḷa and other portraits of rulers with their hands in *añjali* in adoration. It is interesting that this is a representation of Tirumala Nāyaka and his queens in painting as we have him portrayed in stone in the famous pillar statues accompanied by his queens, the like of which there is a large number representing him in various stages of his life with corresponding change in the form itself due to the advance in age. A slight obesity and a paunch distinguish his later age over earlier representations in metal and ivory. The ivory figures now in Śrīraṅgam temple museum are indeed very interesting, but against all this, this painting of Mīnakshī's marriage with Tirumala as the principal witness affording us his portrait in a painting to compare with his lithic, metal and ivory forms is indeed interesting. There are other paintings illustrating scenes from the lives of Śaiva saints taken from the *Periapurāṇam* of Śekkiḷār.

At Tirupparuttikuṇṛam, in the *saṅgītamaṇḍapa,* the outer one close to the main shrine, *(Pl. LI)* the earlier series of fragments, depicting the birth and anointing of Vardhamana, present an earlier phase of Vijayanagara painting of the fourteenth century. The other paintings here belong to a later date. Some are of the sixteenth century, and others, the latest ones, are *(Pls. LII-LIV)* of the seventeenth century—the time of the Nāyakas. Scenes from the life of Ṛishabhadeva, the first Tīrthaṅkara, of Vardhamāna, of Kṛishṇa, the cousin of the Tīrthaṅkara Nemināṭha, as well as the life of Nemināṭha himself, are all graphically portrayed in a long series with elaborate labels, painted in Tamil, explaining each incident clearly. In the later painting this becomes a regular feature, as we may observe in other paintings at Chidaṁbaram, Tiruvālur, etc. Even in temple hangings on cloth this method of painting the labels became a regular practice. It may also be observed in the miniature paintings from the South and the Deccan, as in the *Yamapaṭa* and the coronation of Yudhishṭhira of the Cuḍḍapah school with their legends in Telugu. At Bhārhut for the first time in the second century B.C., labels explaining panels are given in the script of the time in the

favoured popular language Prākṛit. The revival of this practice is probably a special feature in the Vijayanagara period, and particularly in the Nāyaka phase, where the place from which the paintings emanate have the local language, Telugu, Tamil or Canarese to explain the themes portrayed.

Vasudeva receiving the newborn baby from Devakī, crossing the Yamunā and giving the child to Nandagopa, the *bālalīlās* of Kṛishṇa, his killing various Asuras, Sakaṭa, Dhenuka, (*Pl. XXV*) etc. the uprooting of the Yamaḷa trees as he crawled along pulling the mortar to which he was chained, and so forth, a whole group of cows, cowherds and milkmaids, are all graphically portrayed in this series. These and several other incidents from the life of Ṛishabhadeva, Vardhamāna and Neminātha, portrayed along with their descriptive labels have been discussed at length by T. N. Ramachandran in his book on the Tirupparuttikuṇṟam Temples, with a wealth of detail in the accompanying plates to illustrate each one of the episodes. It is interesting to note that such important formalities as the presentation of the *pūrṇakumbha*, the overflowing vase with lotus, flowers and other objects, as a welcome are specially stressed. Dancers and musicians are represented in innumerable charming panels to indicate the joy of the occasion, welcome to the distinguished guests and so forth. The *pūrṇakumbha* has ever remained a symbol of the heart brimming with joy, welcoming the guests with utmost warmth, recalling the Vedic line, *suvarṇapātram madhoḥ pūrṇam gṛihṇāti* which is the receiving of a vessel honey-filled and sweet, indicating the sweet approach of the welcoming host towards the honoured guest.

In Tañjāvur, in the gigantic Bṛihadīśvara temple, there is an upper layer of Nāyaka paintings covering the earlier Choḷa series. The long panel facing west in the circumambulatory passage, in the Nāyaka series, shows Indra on an elephant, Agni on a ram and Yama on a buffalo, Nirṛiti on a human mount, Varuṇa on a *makara* and Marut on a deer. The *amṛitamanthana* scene here appropriately presents the objects that rose out of the ocean when it was turned like the Kalpavriksha (wish-fulfilling tree) Uchchaiśravas (celestial horse), Airāvata (heavenly elephant), Kāmadhenu (the cow of plenty), Rambhā, Urvaśī (celestial nymphs), and others. Lakshmī is towards one end, with her hands in assurance of protection and prosperity, and is approached by the Devas wonderingly as she proved a great wonder, almost the coveted prize of the mighty churning, but none could dare approach her except her chosen lord Vishṇu. On the adjacent south wall is a long *amṛitamanthana* scene repeated again with the Devas on one side and the Asuras on the other, holding the hoods and tail of Vāsuki respectively, Mt. Mandara, the wonderful stick chosen for this unprecedented churning, the great tortoise supporting mount Mandara, fish and flowers suggesting the mass of water composing the mighty ocean, as it has always been the convention, and even textually indicated clearly in the *Chitrasūtra* of the *Vishṇudharmottara* that water in any form, shown in a river or in a stream, a lake or even the ocean, should be suggested by countless fishes, crocodiles, tortoises: *anantair matsyakachchhapaiḥ. Vishṇudharmottara* 3.41. Above the panel, Vishṇu, flanked by Śrī and Bhūdevī, is approached by Brahmā, Indra and the other gods. The glory of Indra is stressed by repeating him on an elephant at one end.

On the wall beyond, facing north, is a long panel depicting sage Durvāsa, first in penance, then bathing a Śivaliṅga with water from a tank, gathering a garland from the *liṅga* and offering it to Indra, approaching on Airāvata.

Beyond this is a battle scene of charioteers. On the opposite wall is a panel representing Durgā fighting the demons, Śumbha, Niśumbha and others. She is in the *ālīḍha* pose of a warrior fighting vigorously. It is interesting to compare this with the literary description of Devī's fight with Śumbha and Niśumbha in the *Durgāsaptaśatī* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya-*

purāṇa which is equally a favourite theme in several paintings of the Kāngrā and other Pahārī and Rājasthāni schools. Further up on the wall facing north is a repetition of this theme.

It then proceeds to relate how Vishṇu gathered lotuses from a tank to worship Śiva, *(Pl. XXVI)* how he offered one thousand flowers a day, and when he failed to get one on an occasion, made up for it by offering his own eye, and thereby won the blessing of Śiva as Vishṇvanugrahamūrti. The stylised form of the tank with trees in the vicinity is characteristic of this mode of representation. The form of Vishṇvanugrahamūrti Śiva as he presents him with the *chakra* in appreciation of his great devotion, where the beautiful eye that distinguished Vishṇu as Puṇḍarīkāksha is plucked out without the least hesitation to form the last and most important flower of the thousand, so immensely pleases him. The theme has a representation even in early Pallava art, in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchī. This painting here is a representation of the same theme in the seventeenth century, ten centuries later, and in a stylised and conventionalised manner. A ṛishi in penance beyond, graced by the appearance of Vishṇu on Garuḍa, shows how the Lord, who manifested himself as a boongiver to the highest saints, himself gathered flowers to adore Śiva as the Supreme Being. The best preserved portion here is Vishṇu gathering flowers.

The various temples at Kumbakoṇam and other nearby places in Tañjāvur district presenting the Nāyaka phase of art are equally noteworthy. These paintings continue the tradition of the Vijayanagara craftsmen and form a close link with the immediate past, and in fact should be studied along with those of the Vijayanagara.

The temple at Tiruvālur is among the most famous Śaivite shrines in South India; and Sundara, the great devotee saint, proclaims himself in one of his hymns as the most humble adorer of all those born in Tiruvālur: *tiruvālūr pirantārkum ellārkum aḍiyen, Tevāram*. The image of Tyāgarāja (Somāskanda is so styled here in Tiruvālur) is a masterpiece of metal sculpture. Legend has it that an early mythical Choḷa king, Muchukunda, who was monkey-faced, brought it from heaven. The inadvertent dropping of Bilva leaves on a Śivaliṅga by a monkey perched on the tree on the night of Śivarātri had its efficacy, and an animal, innocent of the fruit of its action, was, through the blessing of the Lord, born an emperor, but retained the monkey face and the memory of his former existence as an animal.

This popular legend finds a place in a series of paintings of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century on the ceiling, between the second colonnade of pillars in the thousand pillared *maṇḍapa*, the narration enlivened by detailed descriptive labels explaining each incident as is the painter's wont in this late phase of Nāyaka art. Muchukunda, the great devotee of Śiva, is first portrayed as a great friend of Indra, the Lord of heaven, and as his great ally in overcoming the Asuras. Majestically he rides an elephant in a great procession. He is received with great honour by Indra at the entrance to his city of Amarāvatī, and the beautiful celestial damsels honouring him by scattering parched rice from their balconies, which is most beautifully represented in the paintings, recalling the famous line of the poet, *āchāralājair iva paurakanyāḥ*, *Raghuvamśa* 2, 10. Waving of lamps and offering of garlands complete this admiration of a mortal king by the celestials. Muchukunda is interested in the adoration of Tyāgarāja by Indra. Instructed by Śiva in his dream, Muchukunda requests Indra to give him the image of Tyāgarāja. Indra presents seven Tyāgarājas, all of them alike, making it difficult for him to choose the real one. It was considered by the lord of the celestials that so baffled, Muchukunda would in all probability choose the wrong one and not the principal figure that Indra valued most. But Muchukunda triumphed and, as advised by Nārada, brings them all to the earth in a celestial

chariot, for being established in different spots. There are interesting scenes of dance in the *sabhā* of Indra by celestial nymphs including Rambhā and Urvaśī. Muchukunda, praying and obtaining the help of Vishṇu, shown as Lakshmīnārāyaṇa, on his serpent couch in the milky ocean, represented almost as a tank, is interesting. Festivities connected with the temple of Tyāgarāja are also graphically depicted in this series of paintings. Very interesting indeed is the display of fireworks, creating lit up trees and creepers that flare up and soar high scattering blazing flowers of sparks so pleasing in their formation to the watching eye of the spectator. This festival of lights and fire works is a feature in the grand annual festival in all temples of South India even today.

In the temple at Chidambaram, on the ceiling of the large *maṇḍapa* in front of the shrine of Śivakāmasundarī, there is represented the story of the genesis of the Bhikshāṭana
(*Pl. XXVII*) form of Śiva and of Mohinī of Vishṇu. The plan of Śiva and Vishṇu to proceed to Dārukāvana to test the Ṛishis and Ṛishipatnis, by assuming the strange guise of the naked beggar and the bewitching enchantress, succeeds. Bhikshāṭana captures the hearts of the Ṛishipatnis while Mohinī ravishes the hearts of the sages, as narrated at length in long panels, row after row, in bright and beautiful colours. Beyond this story is that of the discomfited Ṛishis performing the *ābhichārika homa* to destroy Śiva and how, out of the fire, arose the deer, the snake, the tiger, Muyalaka and so forth. Towards another end of the *maṇḍapa,* there is Gaṇeśa and Umāsahita with Ṛishis, Skanda with Vallī and Devasenā, Nandī conversing with Śiva and Pārvatī in Kailāsa, Naṭaraja as Sabhāpati with Śivakāmasundarī, surrounded by Gaṇas dancing and playing musical instruments. There are also several other stories from *Śivapurāṇa,* illustrating the lives of saints.

In the *maṇḍapa* in front of the *gopura* leading to the shrine of the goddess, there is an impressive painting of Naṭarāja with Śivakāmasundarī in the *sabhā,* surrounded by the planets, celestial beings, the Dīkshitars (temple priests) of Chidambaram and so forth. All these present the Nāyaka phase of decoration in this ancient temple.

In the Kapardīśvara temple at Tiruvalañjuḷi, where the main shrine is for Gaṇeśa, a famous form, very close to another famous form, that of Skanda, is Swāmimalai, that is just adjacent to this, is a series of paintings of very great importance in a study of the Nāyaka phase. My attention to it was drawn graciously several years ago by His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya of Kāñchī. These belong to the seventeenth century. The *līlās* or sports of Śiva are graphically presented on the ceiling. The description in the Pradoshastava (the hymn of twilight) is clearly followed in representing the orchestral accompaniment to the dance of Śiva. Naṭarāja, multiarmed, dances, with Vāsuki encircling him as an aureole, his vigorous movements scattering flowers all around; even a fish sporting in mid-air suggesting
(*Pl. LV*) the spilling of the celestial river Gaṅgā escaped out of his *jaṭās,* his foot in fast motion, taken off the body of the dwarf Apasmāra, who sits up in glee. Devī, as Śivakāmasundarī, stands quietly holding a lotus in her hand and watching the dance of her Lord, Brahmā keeps time and Vishṇu plays the *mṛidaṅga* drum, while a Deva plays the *pañchamukhavādya* (five-faced drum), drum that has survived for centuries and so even till very recently a few decades ago played in some of the more important ancient temples of Tañjāvur district, having an excellent example of it preserved in the Madras Museum. Ṛishis and other celestials from above watch in adoration this feast for the eyes of the glory of Śiva's twilight dance.

Another panel represents Bhikshāṭana Śiva as the lovely beggar, accompanied by his
(*Pl. LVI*) dwarf attendants and receiving the alms from the Ṛishipatnis. Yet another panel representing the popular theme of Rati and Manmatha, the former on a swan and the latter in
(*Pl. LVII*) the *ālīḍha,* warrior pose, holding his flower arrows on a chariot drawn by parrots. We

may recall similar chariot two centuries earlier in the Virūpāksha temple ceiling at Hampi. The youthful dancer accompanying Rati is to suggest her youth and charm. We may here recall that Manmatha felt reassured, as he tried to strike Śiva in a serene and placid ascetic attitude, as he was convinced by a look at Pārvatī, that he could see clearly excelled and put to shame even the proverbial beauty of his own consort Rati.

Śiva and Pārvatī on a bull, blessing Vishṇu, standing adoring them, is the theme of a panel representing Vishṇvanugrahamūrti. This is painted with great vigour, with both the Gaṇas following Śiva and the celestial musicians in the sky. Another painting shows Śiva and Pārvatī seated in audience and blessing Brahmā and Brahmarishis with a little boy in front of them all, representing the significant story of baby Subrahmaṇya, who taught the meaning of *praṇava* (*omkāra*) to Brahmā, a thing which surprised even Śiva and won for the little genius the title of Brahmaśāstā and Gurumūrti. The hand of Śiva in *chinmudrā*, or the attitude of explaining the highest truth, is very significant here. This is a masterpiece among the paintings. In this instance what is noteworthy is the fact that Gurumūrti is a special feature, a favourite in South India, particularly in the Tamil area and which, besides, is almost unknown elsewhere. There are early Pallava representations not to talk of later ones stressing the importance of Śāstā as expounder of *Praṇava* and almost tutoring Brahmā himself on the very first and the most important syllable starting the *Veda, praṇavaḥ chhandasām iva, Raghuvamśa* 1, as Kālidāsa puts it. In the concept of Brahmaśāstā there is an elaboration almost as a commentary on the importance of *Praṇava*, the three syllables *aum, a, u* and *m*, composing it. Brahmā with his four faces for the four *Vedas* had to be tutored by the little child on the very first start of the *Veda, pranava*, that makes him Gurumūrti, the master of even the master of the *Vedas*, and he thereby gets the attributes of Brahmā which, even in his form of Subrahmaṇya with a single face, are present, *kamandalu*, water vessel, the *akshamālā*, rosary, and the cross band of *rudrākshas* to suggest the holy nature of this particular form. There are several examples of this form where his single face as against four of Brāhmā, though with all his attributes, distinguish him.

(*Pl. LVIII*) (*Pl. LIX*)

Another panel represents a long retinue approaching Śiva, composed of Bhṛiṅgi, the emaciated saint with three legs, Nandikeśvara, Vishṇu, Brahmā, Indra and others. It is interesting to note that Indra is shown with innumerable eyes all over the body, a peculiar suggestion of the epithet Sahasrāksha. In later paintings like those of the Vijayanagara and Nāyaka periods, the representation of Indra with a thousand eyes becomes a regular feature. There are several other paintings also here including Rati and her companions in various attitudes and dance poses, and several other themes from the *Purāṇas*. The paintings in this temple are among the most important to illustrate the Nayaka phase of art.

(*Pl. LX*)

The fact that the Tañjāvur Nāyakas, particularly the earlier ones, closely followed and continued the tradition of the Vijayanagara emperor Kṛishṇadevarāya in sculpture, metal work and painting is no exaggeration. Recently, Nagaswamy has discovered a beautiful portrait in metal of the Nāyaka queen Mūrtimāmbā, the sister-in-law of Achyutarāya, the queen's younger sister whom he had married. The Nāyakas of Tañjāvur were very loyal and had great affection for the emperor at Hampi. The image is an inscribed one with her name *Mūrtimāmbā* given in Tamil letters. The other portrait of Mallappa Nāyaka, also known as Chinnamalla, son of Sevappa, which is very close in the resemblance to Kṛishṇadevarāya's portrait at Tirupati is a remarkable figure, which along with that of Mūrtiammāl illustrates how probably the same workman who fashioned even for Kṛishṇadevarāya continued to adorn the courts of those closely connected with the emperor in other parts of the empire and how the art of Vijayanagara still continued to be an integrated one as a whole.

Śrīraṅgam very close to Tiruchirāpaḷḷi was no doubt a great centre of Vaishṇava worship. It is no wonder that here there was royal patronage and paintings were executed here with a rare devotion bringing into prominence besides the usual festival some special commemorative ones like the one to enhance the glory of the great emperor Kṛishṇadevarāya initiated by Sadāśivarāya in 1555 A.D. by gifting land and making the festival most important. It was called *Bhūpatitiruṇāl* festival at the start of the early new year between the middle of January and February. As festivities are portrayed in paintings at Tiruvālur here also in the temple of Raṅganātha in the south *chitragopura,* Raṅganātha is very vividly represented as a celestial equestrian on a pracing horse, watched with devotion and enthusiasm by large hosts assembled.

In the *prākāra* of the Thāyar *sannadhi* of *Paṅguni Uttira maṇḍapa* as it is known, there has been a great emphasis laid on episodes from the *Bhāgavata.* The Nāyakas were great patrons of Sanskrit and vernacular literature. Being themselves Telugus, the devotional poem in Telugu *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* by Bammara Potana was no doubt given a very high place and many of the *skandhas* or parts of the *Bhāgavata,* particularly the fourth, (*Pl. LXI*) fifth and the sixth are chosen. The story of Svayambhū Manu starts with Pṛithu Chakravarti who, from his coronation, was almost worshipped as an incarnation of Vishṇu himself. How Pṛithu made the earth in the form of a cow milk all that was required for the existence of the entire world is indeed a thrilling episode. The paintings show the cattle grazing, the ripe corn in cornfields and other such details breathing not only deep devotion but appreciation and enjoyment of the bounty of nature. The panels are explained as was customary at the time in long labels in beautiful Telugu letters. A line beneath a panel (*Pl. LXII*) runs in Telugu *prajalaku ā pālu dhānyamauṭa* meaning the milk turning into corn for the people. How Prāchīnabarhi, a descendent of Pṛithu married Sauvarṇā the daughter of Samudra and the royal couple seated with their children before them is given in another panel as the label *samudruni kūturunu sāvarṇā anedāniki prāchīnabarhi* ... explains the pictured panel. There are several scenes like this and a whole colourful series presenting visually the seventeenth century version of the understanding of the *Bhāgavata* of Potana in so far off a place from Āndhra, where still Telugu influence prevailed. It has been pointed out by Nagaswamy that these were executed under the orders of Raghunātha Nāyaka who succeeded queen Mangammāl as the ruler and that the portrait depicting his visit to the temple with his queens is the one towards the end of the interesting painted panels. This series is in itself very important in the Nāyaka phase.

In the Śiva temple at Tiruppuḍaimarudur in Tirunelveli district, there are paintings on the walls which illustrate the usual mythological episodes as well as portrait figures and secular scenes. The portrait scenes are particularly interesting as there is a royal equestrian depicting the king wearing the usual conical crown characteristic of the period, majestically riding the horse with an umbrella held behind him by an attendant. The prancing horse in its details is exactly as it is shaped as decorative feature of pillars in the Kalyāṇamaṇḍapas of the various famous temples. The king is preceded and followed by a retinue of foot soldiers and horsemen. Another shows the king with the queen and probably a brother and other noblemen respectively standing beside him. The hands in the act of worship to scatter flowers are shown only is the case of the principal princely figures. The conical headgear and the dress is all characteristic of the period. The attendants wear the usual normal turbans. These portraits are very interesting as this was a period when portraiture (*Pl. LXIII*) was so very much favoured. It is interesting to compare with this a Mohammaden warrior on horseback. The horse is in very spirited action as the rider tries to use the whip.

A long procession of the army as it moves along is another very interesting group, the composition of which is wonderfully managed by the painter. We know from the historical (*Pl. LXIV*) records of the period that when the army moved, the families also moved in the case of at least the high-ranking warriors. The Nāyaka ruler is here shown in a palanquin that moves along. The equestrians and the foot soldiers brandish their weapons as they move on a steady determined march. Śiva on the bull as Vṛishabhārūḍhamūrti adored by devotees is from a mythological episode to illustrate the grace-conferring attitude of the lord. The (*Pl. LXV*) most interesting of the series of paintings here is a ship of Arab sailors and horses. We know from the story of Māṇikkavāchakar, the Pāṇḍyan minister, how he was sent with a large treasure to purchase Arab horses which were in great demand and which had arrived specially for the Pāṇḍyan king, and how instead of purchasing them, he spent it all in feeding saints and building temples for Śiva. It is interesting to note here the merchant ship with its mast and sails as peopled by Muslim merchants in it. The water is shown as usual by conventional waves in a successive movement as rolling and crawling circlets of foam and fishes moving along, following the dictum of the *Vishṇudharmottara* which was never forgotten, water always to be depicted by a profusion of fishes and tortoises: *anantair matsya-kachchhapaiḥ*.

The flourishing trade of the period is also suggested in the paintings by a depiction of a very important and precious trade in gems. A merchant is displaying a wealth of precious gems to two noblemen who have come to examine and purchase them for the use in the royal palace. The dress of the merchant, his peculiar turban and the slightly conical though not royal turban of the nobleman is particularly to be noticed. A large gem is shown as among the most precious and valuable and probably the one that would most be attractive to even royal taste accustomed to the best of everything.

Among the religious episodes here, specially when it is in the territory of the Pāṇḍyas, the glory of the queen Maṅgayarkaraśi who welcomed the baby saint Tirujñānasambardar and who converted the king after curing him of his illness and made him a staunch devotee of Śiva is narrated here in the first tier. How the baby saint was carried in a palanquin (*Pl. LXVI*) to the royal court, how he cured the king, the miracles and ordeals in which the baby saint won and the Jains lost, is all graphically presented. The king's worship of Sundareśvara in the shrine known as the Indravimāna is another series of panels. In the second tier there are paintings of Naṭarāja, Narasiṁha and Gaṇeśa. Beyond this foreign contact which the Pāṇḍyas had developed with the Chinese and Arabs is portrayed. The Arab ship carrying horses, the march of armies, is all narrated with great flourish. In the third tier the marriage of Mīnākshī with Sundareśvara, a favourite theme in this area, is depicted with gusto introducing, as should be expected, Guṇḍodara. It is interesting here to note that in the context of the Pāṇḍyas, about whom Kālidāsa had such rich information, even the name of the city Madurai as the town of the snake, Ālavāy in Tamil and Hālāsyapura in Sanskrit, which he styles Uragākhyapura, remembers the Gaṇa Kumbhodara as the principal dwarf follower of Śiva, the same as Guṇḍodara, conspicuously pot-bellied of all the Gaṇas. This is interesting to remember in the context of the painting of this remarkable Śivagaṇa whose appetite was such that he gobbled up the food for the entire assembled folk at the marriage intended for their feast and almost emptied the water of the river Vaigai to show how impossible it was to feed even one single gaṇa of Śiva as a token of feasting those from the bridegroom's side.

The incarnations of Vishṇu, all the ten of them, one after the other, are also here. Hanumān joyously informing Rāma of his meeting Sītā after discovering her is a favourite panel, that is often carved in wood on temple cars, and in stone, as in the Rāmaswāmi

temple at Kumbakoṇam, here also represented. Seshaśāyī Vishṇu is another favourite theme which, as we proceed further and further in the south, is frequently repeated as at Śrīraṅgam, at Trivandrum, in the palace at Padmanābhapuram, the Śiva temple of Ettumānur and so forth, often with a single pair of arms, reclining at ease on the serpent couch, vividly represented. The episode of Sundara and Cheramān which already occurs as a favourite theme in the Bṛihadīśvara temple at Tañjāvur even in 1000 A.D. is here repeated, both of them on their way to Kailāsa, one on an elephant and the other on horseback as already seen in the Choḷa painting at Tañjāvur. The fourth tier has a number of episodes to illustrate the marriage of Vallī with Subrahmaṇya. Though normally it is Devasenā, the celestial army personified, that is the consort of Skanda, *skandena sākhshād iva devasenām, Raghuvaṁśa* 7, 1 as Kālidāsa would have it, in the south, particularly in the Tamil area, Vallī, a hunter's daughter, becomes the bride of Skanda with the help of Gaṇeśa. The preceptor of Rājarāja Karuvūrdevar who is already famous in his portrait at Tañjāvur in 1000 A.D. is depicted here as when he visited this famous temple. There are other panels to illustrate Kṛishṇa playing the flute as Veṇugopāla, Manmatha, Ardhanārīśvara, Kālī and other iconographic forms. The flourishing condition of trade and commerce in the Vijayanagara period and the commercial contacts with the neighbouring foreign countries, the life itself of the period, the dress, ornaments, the very approach to life with a rare vivacity, is all beautifully composed in these colourful pictures that again represent the best in the Nāyaka phase of art of the seventeenth century.

The Nāyakas of Vellore, the Wodeyars of Mysore and the viceroys from Penukoṇḍa, Śrīraṅgam and Chandragīri also fostered art. The patron of the famous scholar-philosopher-polymath, Appayya Dīkshita, Chinnabomma Nāyaka and his son Liṅgama Nāyaka, have given the world such famous monuments as the exquisitely carved Jalakaṇṭheśvara temple at Vellore and the Mārgasahāyeśvara temple at Viriñchipuram. The paintings from the temple at Tāḍpatri, the later murals from Kāñchīpuram area, the miniature paintings from the Āndhra and Tamil districts, like the Coronation of Yudhishṭhira and the Yamapaṭa scene from Cuḍḍapah, and the long series of *Rāmāyana* episodes, with explanatory labels, as is usual in such paintings, both in murals and miniatures, are all typical examples of this phase. The last mentioned is one of several miniatures of the Nāyaka period of the seventeenth century now preserved in the Sarasvatī Mahāl Library at Tañjāvur. The seventeenth century was thus very fruitful. The paintings produced during the time of the Nawābs in the South in the eighteenth century, like those of Cuḍḍapah, Kurnool, Arcoṭ and Mysore, are only an extension of the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka style, with the Deccani influence of the Bijāpur, Golkoṇḍa, Hyderābād schools, that are themselves tinged by the Mughal style.

(*Pl. XXVIII*) (*Pl. XXIX*) (*Pl. XXX*)

Chapter VI

Offshoots and Ramifications

THE CUḌḌAPAH SCHOOL IS a very prominent one in which figures are specially distinguished by the arrangement of dress and ornaments in a peculiar manner that distinguishes the crown from other forms elsewhere as also the feminine braid, mode of wearing of garments, jewellery, particularly the circular ornaments like *chuṭṭipaṭṭa, chandra, sūrya, nāga* for the head and the nose ornaments. In the case of the seated figures, the almost lotuslike frill of the lower garment and the wearing of the upper garment to run over the left shoulder in *yajñopavīta* fashion is all very characteristic. Even the umbrella here is a peculiar type. The kinnaras and kinnarīs, half bird and half man with prominent wings shooting up, on either side of a top terrace showering flowers white and thick in clusters falling, is all specially noteworthy in this school. The eyes are mostly wide open and look almost staring. The *kuṇḍala* ear rings of the Brahmin priest who wears a peculiar turban on the head though bare-bodied and with the *uttarīya* upper garment, the rishis with the *jaṭās* conically tied up above their head part of them trailing on the back and shoulders, and with long flowing beard, is all specially to be noted in this series. The courtiers, however, are dressed in the costume of the noblemen in a Nawāb's court of that day. Though the principal figures like the princesses are only bejewelled they have no other apparel except the *antarīya* lower garment and the *uttarīya*, upper garment. A series of paintings of the Cuḍḍapah school illustrating the *Rāmāyaṇa* and completely covering the epic, quoting passages from the text of Vālmīki *Rāmāyaṇa* itself in Telugu characters, and thus very interesting, is in the collection of the Āndhra State Museum at Hyderabad. Mittal's book of this series elaborately deals with these paintings that form an important phase of art and offshoot of the Nāyaka series starting towards the end of the seventeenth century and continuing during the eighteenth century.

Another school like this which is also an offshoot is from Mysore, where under the Wodayars, when they were restored by the British to the throne after Tipu's death in the battle of Śrīraṅgapaṭnam, there was a patronage of art and a continuation of the earlier Nāyaka phase in this area also. This closely resembles in several respects the Marāṭha (*Pl. XXXI*) school of Tañjāvur of which almost the last and the greatest patron was Serfoji who lived in the early nineteenth century and was brought up by Schwartz, the Danish missionary who loved him like his own son and initiated him into the appreciation of every form of art in addition to making him well read in different languages and variety of literature. A portrait of this ruler of Tañjāvur is found in a Navanītakṛishṇa in the National Museum (*Pl. XXXII*) where humbly at the feet of the large-proportioned baby, the prince is shown in the characteristic royal costume and turban of the day, his hands brought together in *añjali*. This is a very fine picture giving the best elements of this school. During the time of the Marathas in the south, there was great encouragement of music, dance, literary composition, every art and craft. Tañjāvur and Kumbakoṇam became great centres of this mode of painting with Mahārāshṭrian touches introduced in what continued to be mainly the local Nāyaka style. Vijayanagara idiom could still be seen, though in a peculiarly transformed form which, from the middle of the eighteenth century, continued for nearly a century more. In this there is a stress of pure colours, avoiding mixing, but with slight, stylised modelling effected by shading the inside of the contour. The principal colours are red, yellow, blueblack and white, all of them pure colours and untinged. Jewels, drapery and architectural elements, like pillars and canopy, are slightly raised, as in low relief, by the use of a special paste composed of fine sawdust and glue, carefully modelled and covered with gold leaf, after fixing in it semi-precious stones of different hues. This is a noteworthy characteristic of the Tañjāvur mode. The principal figure is very often of larger size than the rest, and in spite of the best representation of portraiture as in several picture of the rulers and noblemen, a special type of stylisation is apparent. The figures are chubby and plump, seeming somewhat indolent.

The Mysore school which approaches this in many respects has also its own difference with an apparent Karṇāṭaka touch which cannot be overlooked. The light moulding in low relief with inset semi-precious gems is mostly absent here.

It has already been noticed how in Kerala even the Zamorin of Calicut, the rulers of Travancore and Cochin, were all dominated by the power of the Vijayanagara empire. But in Kerala, the local traditions, reinforced strongly by the Chāḷukya-Hoysaḷa traditions that flowed into the region through the earlier contacts and fueds, had an efflorescence in a peculiar regional school of decorative art, strongly recalling *Kathakaḷi, Oṭṭantuḷḷal* and other modes of dance drama, with picturesque costume and embellishment. The leather shadow play figures, *Olapāvakūttu,* have also the same decorative patterns and designs. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in the Āndhra and Karṇāṭaka regions, the shadow play figures, *tolubommalāṭa,* follow their own local traditions and are closely to be associated with the form and style of paintings in the region.

The Maṭṭāñcheri Palace in Cochin built by the Portuguese about 1557 was presented to Vīrakeralavarma, the then ruler. It is still venerated as the ancient coronation hall of the rulers. The palace was very highly valued and almost worshipped by the peculiar embellishment that was lavished on it. The *Rāmāyaṇa* scenes, painted in the long room to the west of the coronation hall, called the *Paḷḷiyarai,* form a remarkable collection of typical paintings of the period. They were executed towards the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century. The influence of Nārāyana Bhaṭṭātiri, the author of the famous *Nārāyaṇīyam,* a Sanskrit poem condensing the *Bhāgavata* and giving

the glory of Kṛishṇa of Guruvāyur, which was so popular in Malabar, is obvious. These paintings appear to have been executed with a rare fervour almost as if to fight the proselytising spirit of the Portuguese of the time. The scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Devīmāhātmya*, *Bhāgavata* and *Kumārasambhava* are the principal themes.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century paintings in the staircase room to the right of the coronation hall in the south-east of the palace, were executed. Here the themes are Mahālakshmī, Bhūtamātā, Kirātamūrti, the coronation of Rāma, Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu, Umāmaheśvara, Vishṇu in *bhogāsana*, as in the favourite temple of Guruvāyur. The fervour continued not only towards the close of the eighteenth century but in the beginning of the nineteenth century as well. The beautiful pictorial narration of the marriage of Pārvatī, the seven sages persuading Himavān to give his daughter in marriage to Śiva, very interesting to compare with similar portrayal in sculpture at Ellora; Umā amidst her companions decorating herself, as a bride, an impressive marriage procession, and the presentation of the bride by Vishṇu, are all quaint and picturesque representations of familiar figures from Malabar giving glimpses of the life of the period, so simple and natural in a country as yet untainted by external influence. These very early nineteenth century paintings, even as drawings, have immense value in understanding the painter's art in this area. Śiva's dance with Mohinī, caught unawares and appearing crestfallen before Pārvatī, Kṛishṇa in the company of gopīs, recalling the loving description of Jayadeva and a magnificent Govardhanagiridhara, lifting the mountain by Kṛishṇa to shelter large crowds of cowherds, milkmaids and cattle, is interesting for comparison with the magnificent composition of the seventh century of the same theme at Mahābalipuram. In this Govardhanagiridhara scene, the ease (*Pl. XXXIII*) with which Kṛishṇa lifts the mountain while playing the flute with his hand or joking with the concourse of cowherds and milkmaids, assembled under this strange canopy, recalls the verse in the context from the *Nārāyaṇīya* which was no doubt on the lips of everyone in Malabar: *bhavati vidhṛitaśaile bālikābhir vayasyair api vihitavilāsam kelilāpādilole, savidhamilitadhenūr ekahastena kaṇḍūyati sati paśupālās tosham aishanta sarve, Nārāyaṇīya* 63-5, as he raised the hill he pleased them all, joking merrily with the girls and companions, and caressing the cows as they approached him. The care of a mother for a little child, as it rushes towards her and help offered by a milkmaid to an elderly woman using her staff to raise herself, the fondling of a baby by a newly married couple, the fond approach of the cows towards Kṛishṇa, completely confident of his might to protect them, shows the keen study of life by the painter. Gaṇeśa on his mouse and Kārtikeya on his peacock on either side of Umāmaheśvara is another very beautiful composition where Nandī rests comfortably in couchant attitude.

The temple at Trichur has paintings coming close to this school in date and spirit of execution. Here there is the favourite theme of Rama teaching the highest principles of philosophy while Hanumān reads the text from the manuscript in his hand. This is repeated all over the Chera area often in painting in rich colour and is also executed in metal in the miniatures that form images in domestic worship. In the temple at Trichur, one of the finest paintings is of Kṛishṇa receiving Sudāmā with utmost affection. The ragged garment and the emaciated form of the poor Brahmin and his embarassed look contracting the beaming pleasure in the eyes of the princely Kṛishṇa, is very interesting study. These (*Pl. XXXIV*) murals inspired Rājā Ravi Varma, the famous painter of Travancore who has a special crown for his Kṛishṇa chosen from these paintings for decorating his own pictures. The other details of dress and ornamentation, even the peacock feather fan and other details, can be observed in the paintings of Ravi Varma, who has continued the eighteenth century traditions of Kerala both from Cochin and from Travancore.

There are other paintings from the temples at Tiruvañchikulam, Triprayār, Ettumānur (*Pl. XXXV*) and others of special interest illustrating the most important features of this phase of art. The large painting of Naṭarāja of Ettumānur which is a difficult but well achieved composition and Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu, anothei large panel of the special form of recumbant Vishṇu with only two arms in this area, as at Mahābalipuram in the seventh century Pallava sculptural representation, but with his right hand extended to adore a Śivaliṅga, is all specially noteworthy in this school of painting.

The murals from the Padmanābhapuram Palace, fresh and well preserved, have a wealth of detail, are of great iconographic interest and are typical of excellent work of the eighteenth century in this part of Kerala. The seated Vishṇu, Śeshaśāyī, Mahishamardinī Durgā on the cut head of a buffalo, the special favourite mode of representation in the South, Bhairava beside his dog, Harihara, Gaṇeśa and other themes are executed with great (*Pl. XXXVI*) skill. Śiva as Dakshiṇāmūrti, with *yogapaṭṭa* on his left foot, seated under the banyan tree, attended by ṛishis, is a delightful composition on the wall above the entrance. The offering of huge bunches of plantain, milk porridge and cakes to Gaṇeśa, to the accompaniment of music, with stately lamp stands branching off at the sides, which are peculiar to Malabar, is again most interesting.

In the temple at Trichakrapuram, another painting of the later half of the eighteenth century that illustrates Kṛishṇa fondled by Nanda and Yasodā, and taught to walk slowly (*Pl. XXXVII*) by cautiously placing his steps is indeed a masterpiece. In Kerala as in Āndhra, Orissa and Karṇāṭaka, there are beautiful illustrated manuscripts in palm leaf. One of them of the sixteenth century from the collection of Nilakanthan Nambudiripad of Kanpur Mana, Chunangad showing Śeshaśāyī Vishṇu with the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha swirling their clubs and approaching with rolling flashing eyes, reclining Vishṇu calm and undaunted, with Śrī Devī and Bhūdevī, one at his feet and the other towards his head, is indeed a magnificent incised drawing that is to be counted among the masterpieces of this age.

The Vijayanagara school has had thus a number of offshoots from one and near Mahārāshṭra to the other near the borders of Orissa to the North and upto the very point of Kanyākumārī the extreme south in the Kerala, Tamil Nāḍu, Karṇāṭaka, Āndhra, and Mahārashtra to such an extent that even the Paiṭhān school has its own approaches in several respects to the Karṇāṭaka and Cuḍḍappah schools, which are themselves offshoots of the Nāyaka phase of Vijayanagara art. The Vijayanagara emperors who inspired art have thus left an indelible impression of their aesthetic appreciation and patronage to such an extent that even when the Company school was just lingering towards the end of the nineteenth century, there were still faint traces of the earlier phase in a vast changing fashion in art in the South.

Colour plates

(I to XXXVI)



PLATE I. *Queen and Chauri-bearers. Chalukya, Badami, 6th century*
(*Courtesy : Skira*)



PLATE II. *Devi, Pallava, Panamalai, 7th-8th century*
(Courtesy : Skira)



PLATE III *Flying vidyadharas, Rashtrakuta, Ellora, 9th century*
(Courtesy : Skira)



PLATE IV. *Heavenly musicians. Chola. Thanjavur, 1000 A.D.*
(Courtesy : Skira)

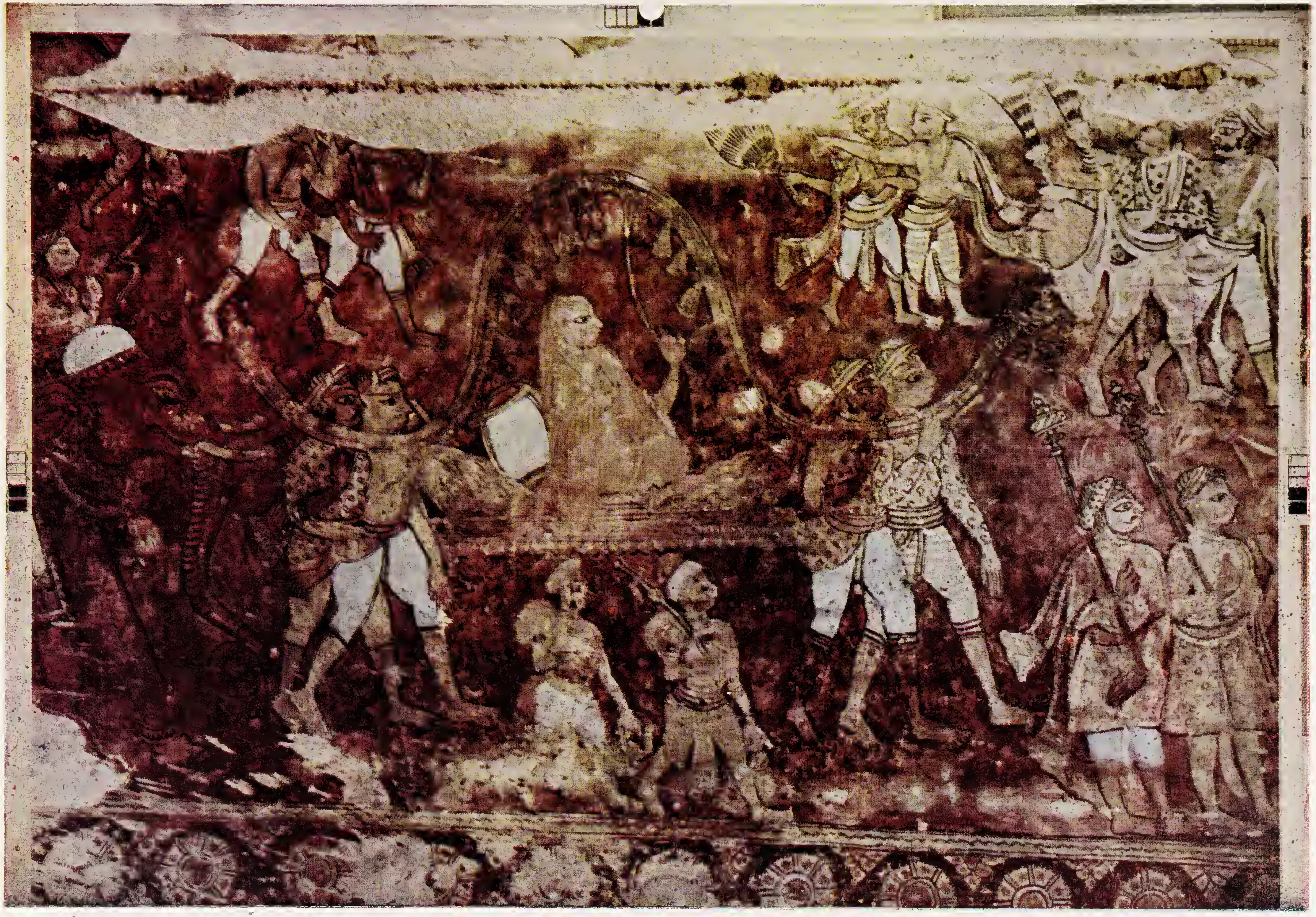


PLATE V. *Vidyaranya taken in procession, Vijayanagara, Hampi, 15th century*



PLATE VI. *Arjuna's archery contest, Vijayanagara, Hampi, 15th century*

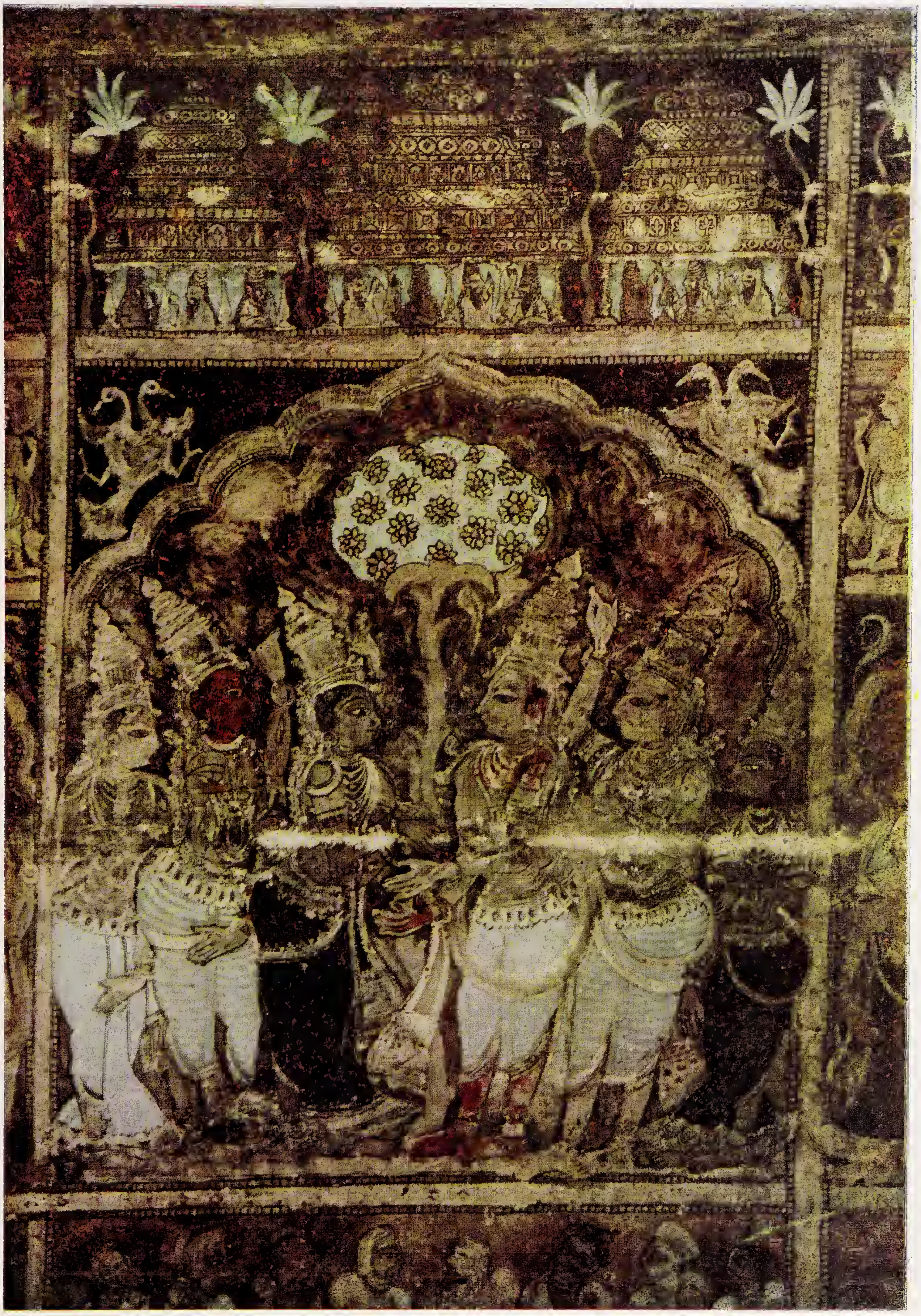


PLATE VII. *Rama's marriage, Vijayanagara, Hampi, 15th century*



PLATE VIII. *Tripurantaka, Vijayanagara, Hampi, 15th century*



PLATE IX. *Virupanna and Viranna with followers, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE X. *Siva blessing Manunitikoda, Chola, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*

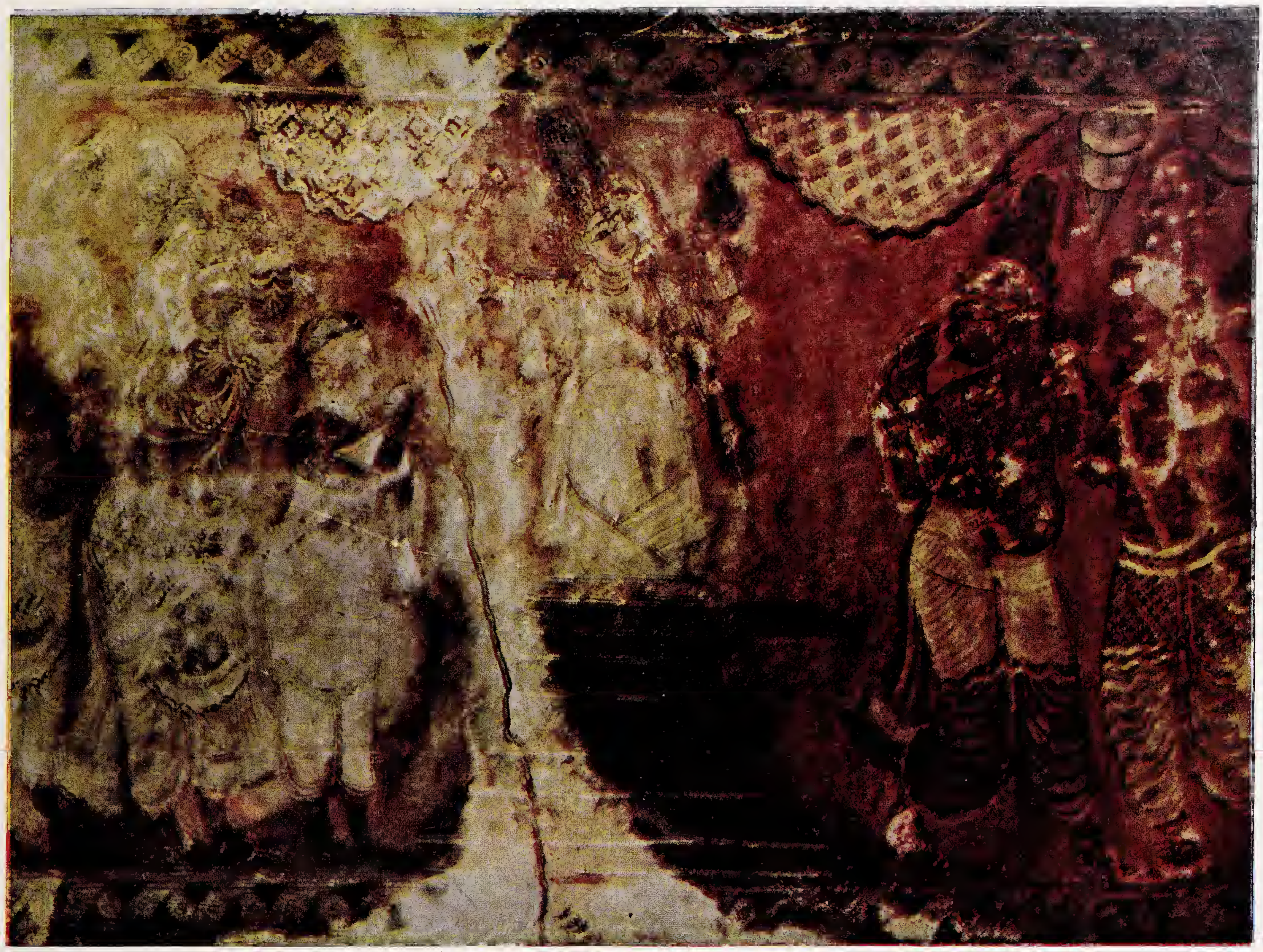


PLATE XI. *Kalari, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATES XII AND XIII. *Dakshinamurti, two examples of the same temple, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



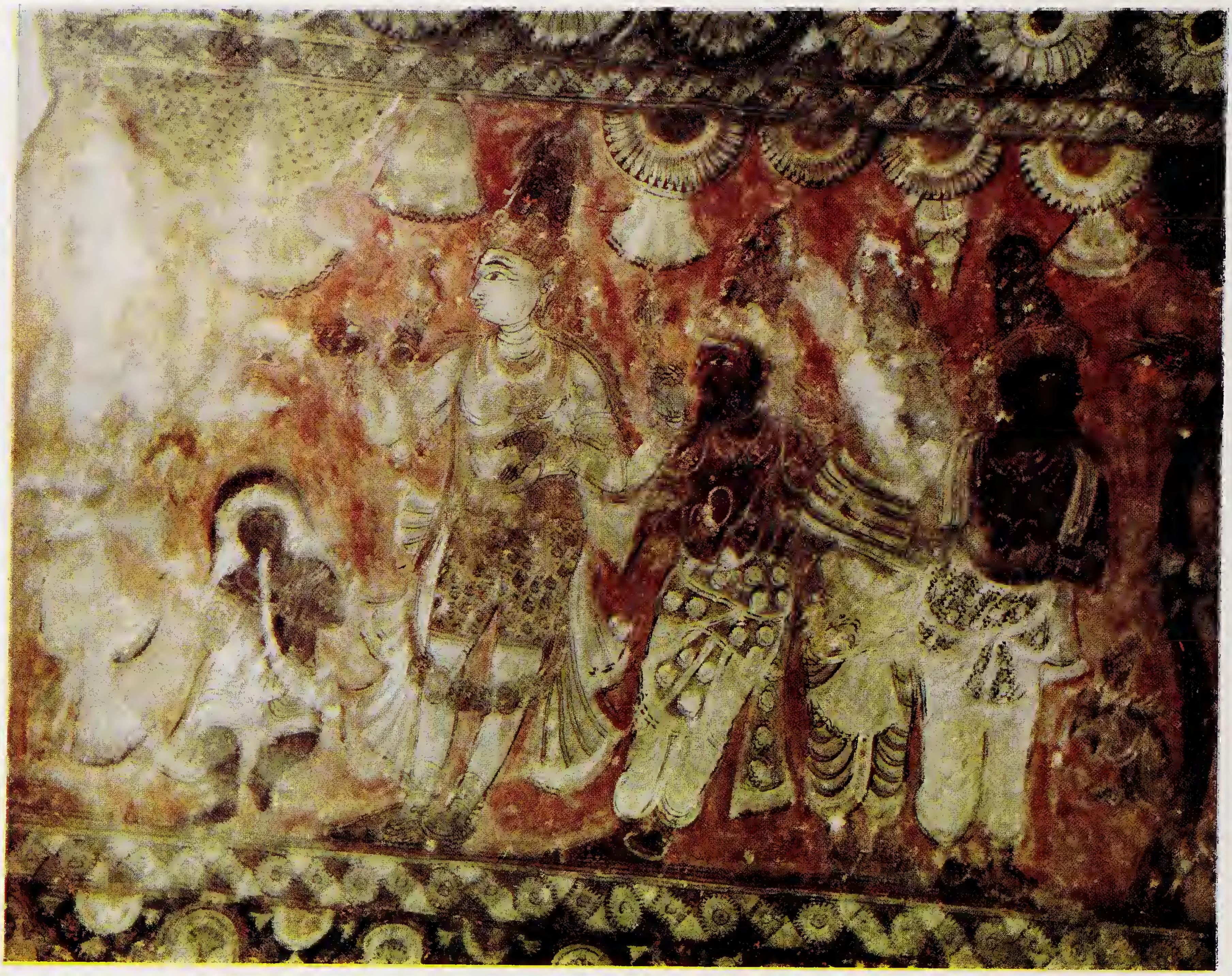


PLATE XIV. *Chandesa anugrahamurti, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XV. *Bhikshatana Siva, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XVI. *Harihara, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XVII. *Kalyana sundara, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XVIII. *Tripurantaka, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XIX. *Gangadhara-Gauriprasada, Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XX. *Siva tandava in Bhujangatrasita pose. Vijayanagara, Lepakshi, 16th century*



PLATE XXI. *Muchukunda's story, Nayaka, Tiruvalur, 17th century*



PLATE XXII. *Kaliya Krishna. Vijayanagara, Tiruvilimilalai, 16th century*

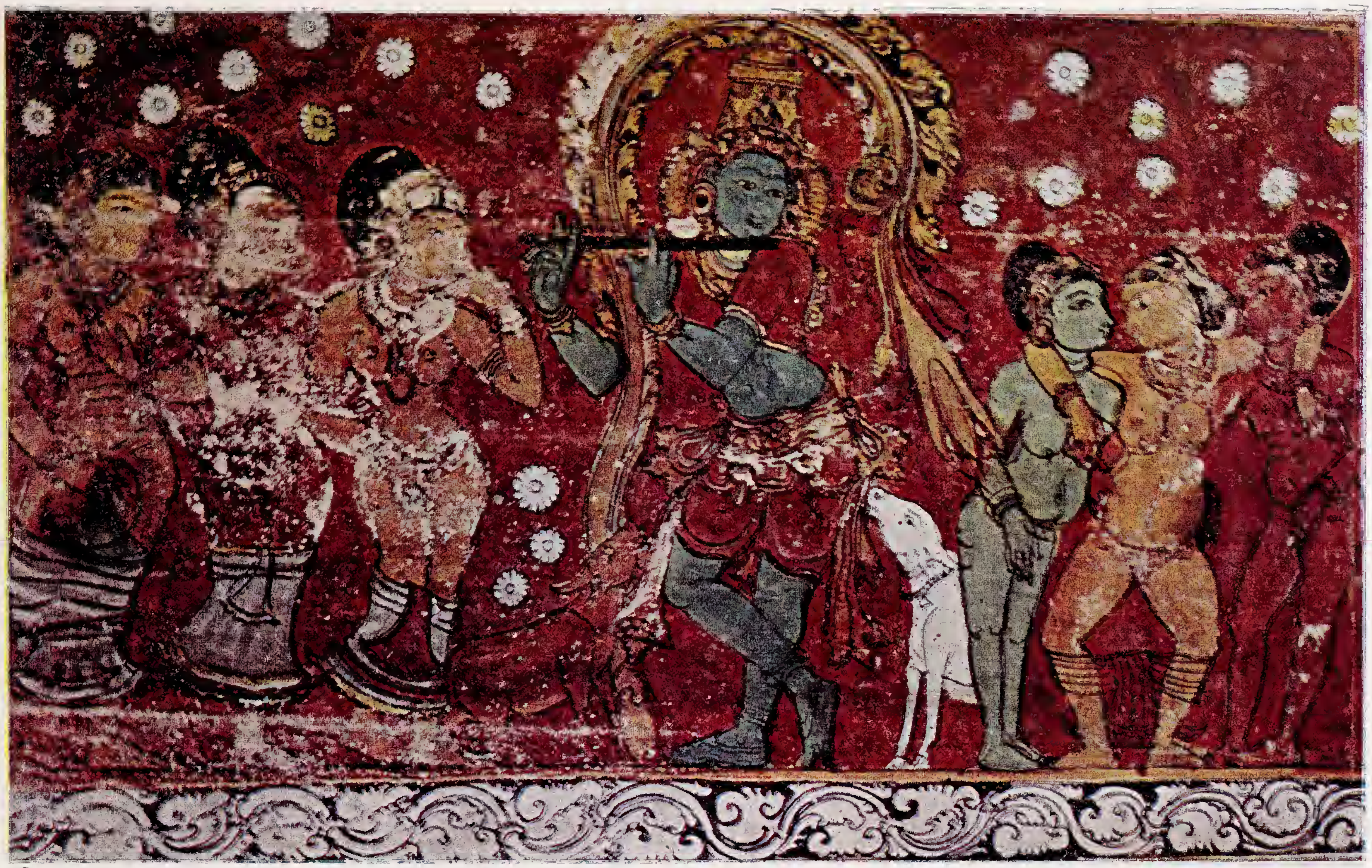


PLATE XXIII. *Venugopala, Vijayanagara, Tiruvilimilalai, 16th century*

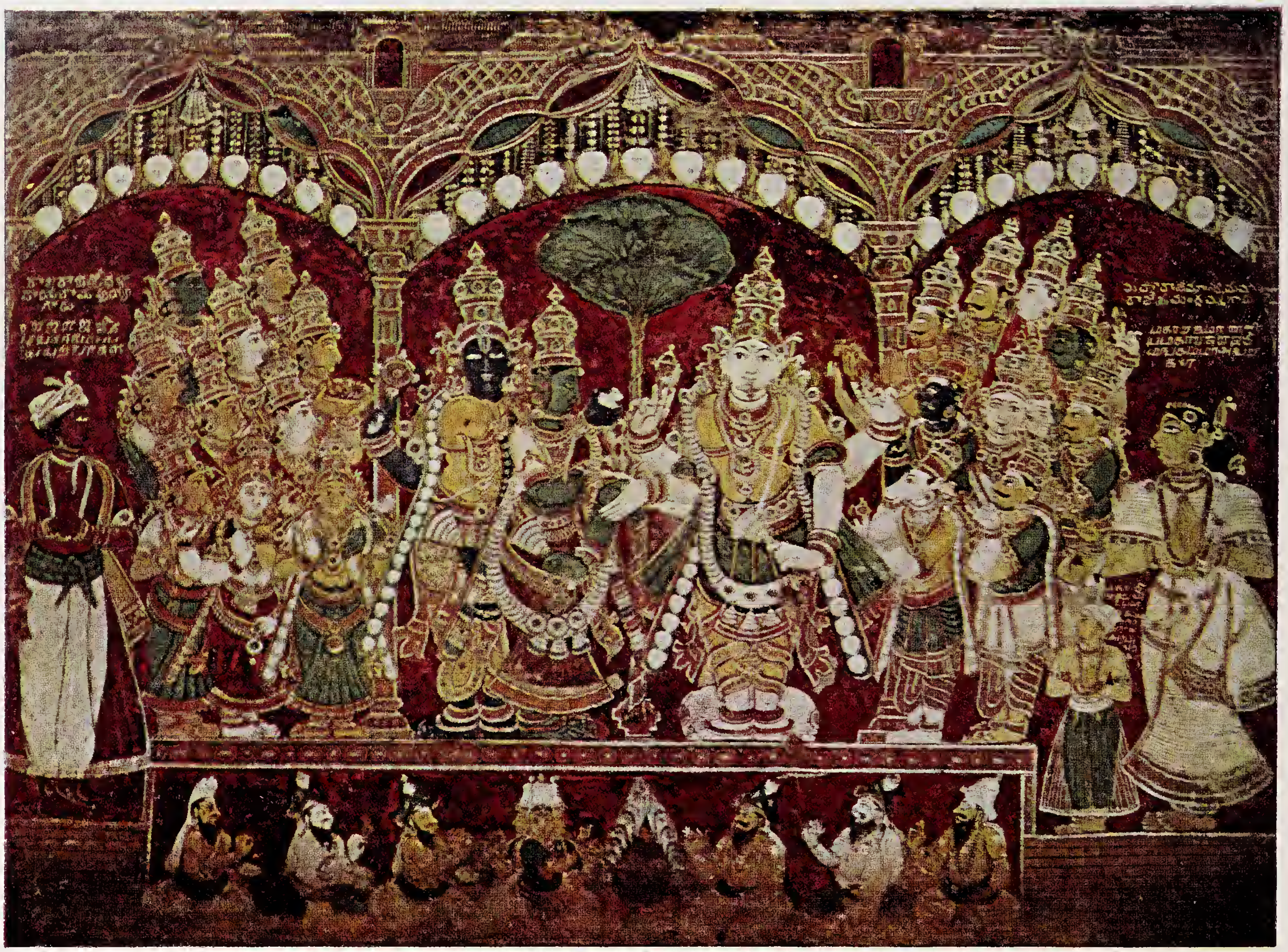


PLATE XXIV. *Marriage of Minakshi with Sundara, Minakshi-Sundaresvara Temple, Nayaka, Madurai, 17th century*



PLATE XXV. *Balalilas, Nayaka, Tirupparuttikunram, 17th century*



PLATE XXVI. *Vishnu gathering lotuses, Nayaka, Thanjavur, 17th century*



PLATE XXVII. *Bhikshatana and Mohini, Nayaka, Chidambaram, 17th century*



PLATE XXVIII. *Yudhishthira's coronation, Nayaka (Madras Museum), 17th century*



PLATE XXIX. *Yama Pata, Nayaka, Cuddapa School, Tadpatri, 17th Century*

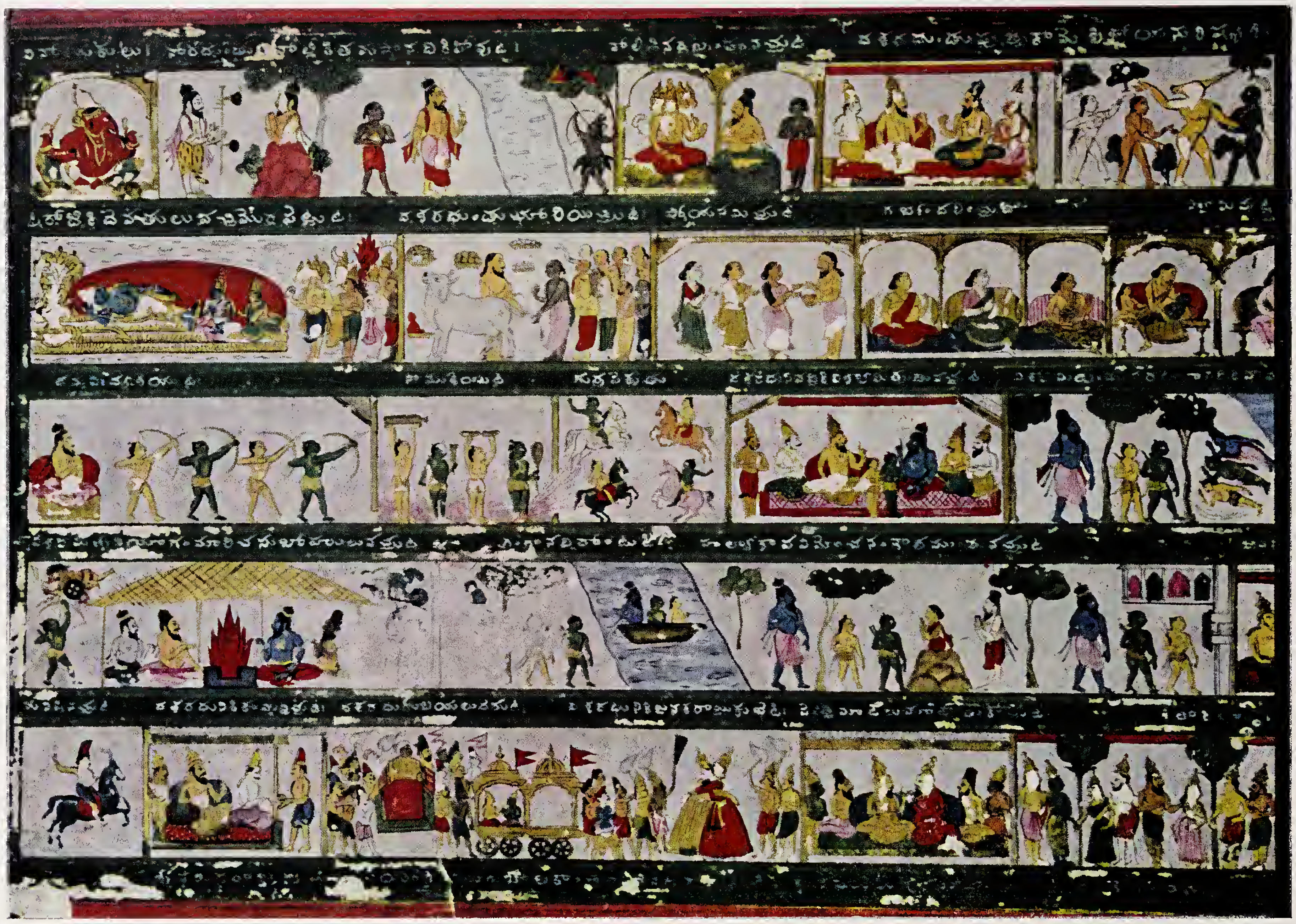


PLATE XXX. *Miniatures illustrating Ramayana scenes, Nayaka, (Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur), 17th century*

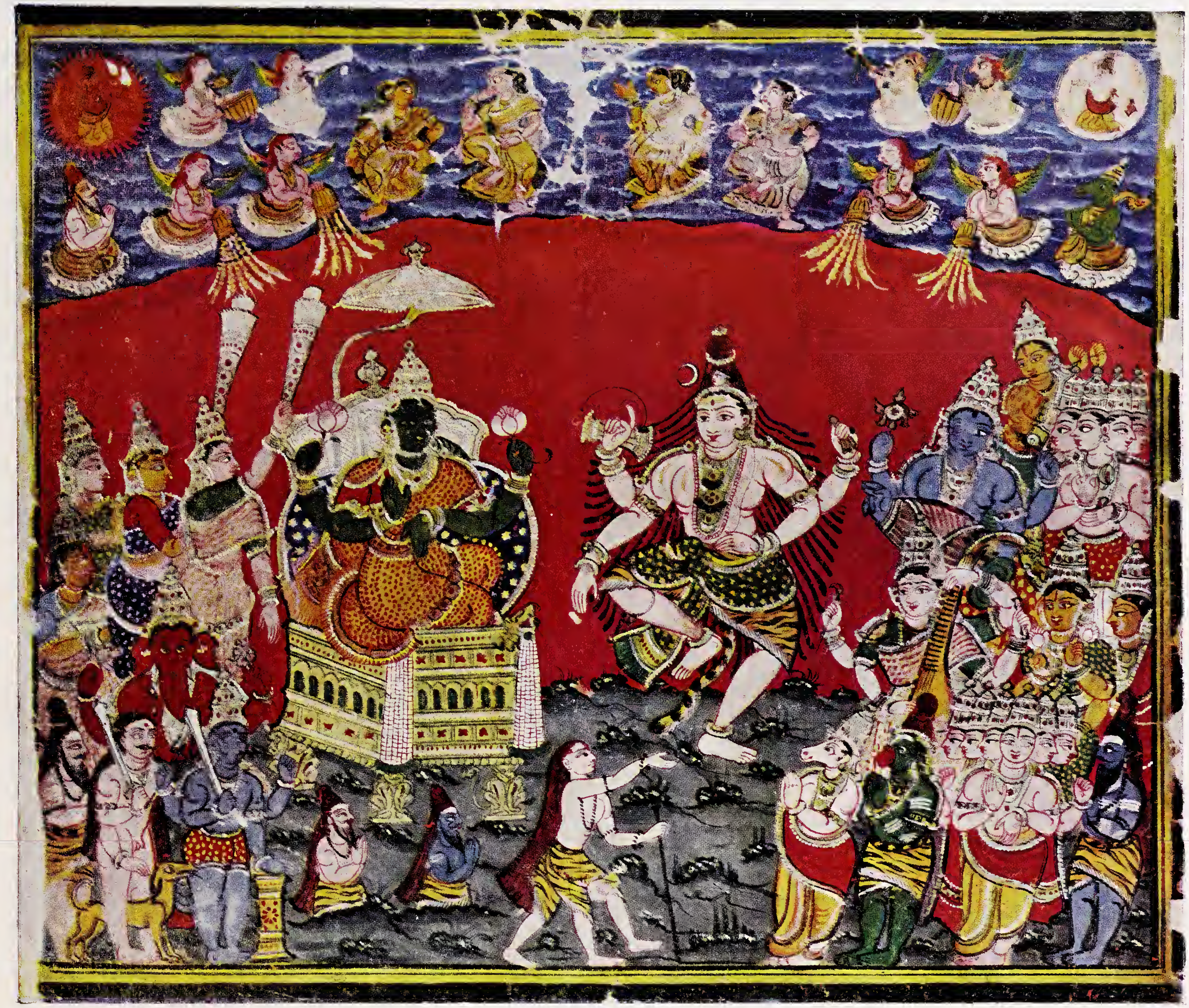


PLATE XXXI. *Siva dancing Sandhya Tandava with Celestial musicians; and with Devi watching from her throne, Mysore School (National Museum), 18th century*



PLATE XXXII. *Navanita Krishna, Mahratta School (National Museum), 19th century*



PLATE XXXIII. *Govardhana-dhari, Kerala School, Mattancherry Palace, Cochin, 18th century*



PLATE XXXIV. *Venugopala, Kerala School, Trichur, 18th century*



PLATE XXXV. *Nataraja, Kerala School, Ettumanur, 16th century*



PLATE XXXVI. *Dakshinamurti, Kerala School, Peramangalam, 17th century*

Black and white plates

(XXXVII to LXVI)



PLATE XXXVII. *Seshasayi Vishnu, and the demons Madhu and Kaitabha, Kerala School, Manuscript illustration, 16th century*
(Courtesy : Nilakantan Nambudripad)



PLATE XXXVIII. *Siva Tripurantaka, Chalukya, Pattadakkal, 8th century*



PLATE XXXIX. *Siva as Madanantaka, Gangaikondacholapuram, Chola, 11th century*



PLATE XL. *Arjuna's archery contest, Hoysala, Belur, 12th century*



PLATE XLI. *Kiratarjuniya scene, Chola, Darasuram, 12th century*



PLATE XLII. *Kalari Murti, Rashtrakuta, Ellora (Cave 15), 8th century*



PLATE XLIII. *Chandesa Anugrahamurti. Chola. Gangaikondacholapuram. 11th century.*



PLATE XLIV. *Kalyana Sundara, Vakataka, Elephanta, 5th century*



PLATE XLV. *Minakshi marrying Siva, Nayaka, Madurai, 17th century*



PLATE XLVI. *Gangadhara, Chola Mayuram, 11th century*



PLATE XLVII. *Gangadhara, Rashtrakuta, Ellora (Cave 16), 8th century*



PLATE XLVIII. *Vrishabhantika Siva, Rashtrakuta, Ellora (Cave 16), 8th century*



PLATE XLIX. *Rama slaying Tadaka, Vijayanagara, Somapalayam, 16th century*

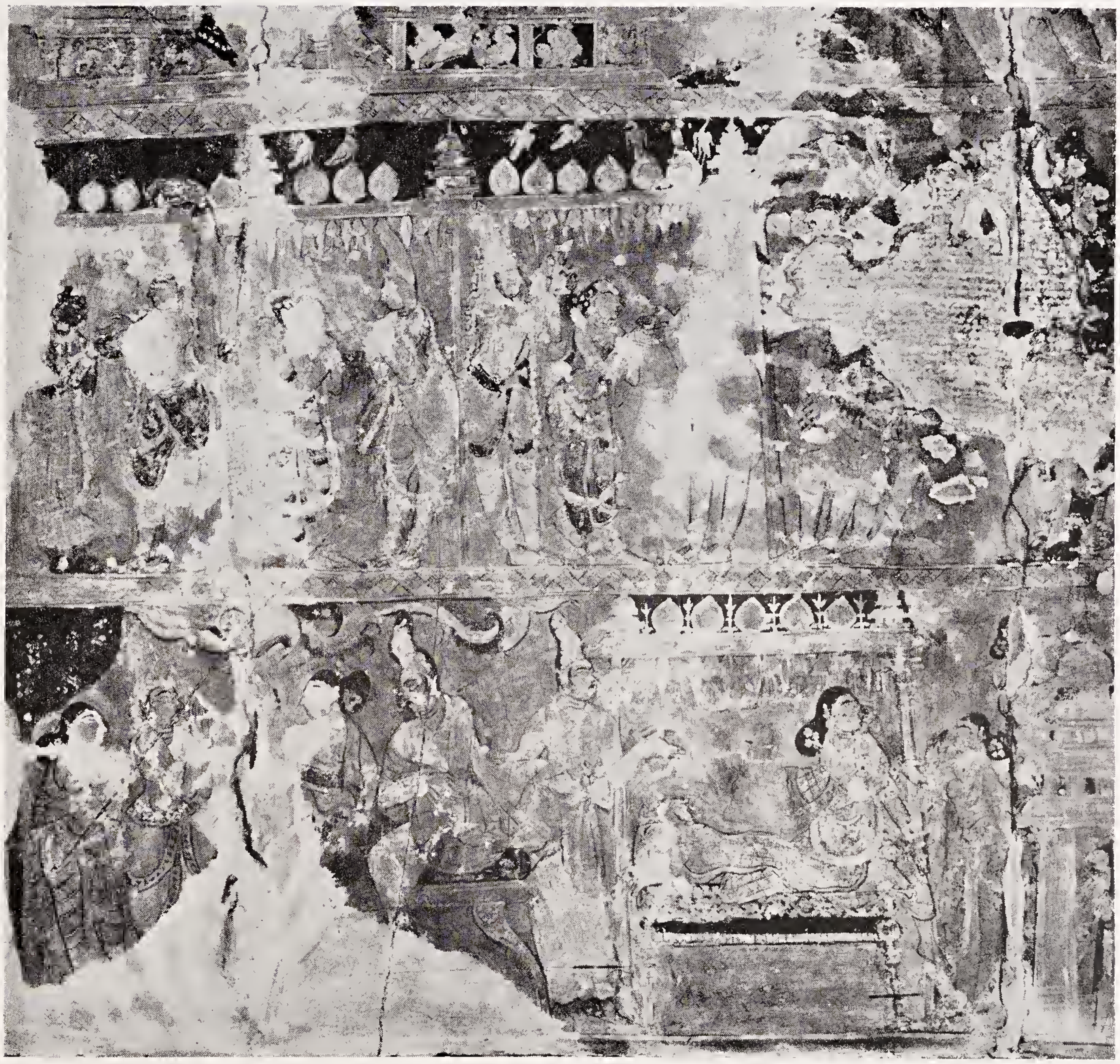


PLATE L. *Rama bidding farewell to Dasaratha and Kaikeyi, Vijayanagara, Somapalayam, 16th century*



PLATE LI. *Anointing of Vardhamana, Vijayanagara, Sangita Mandapa, Tirupparuttikunram, 14th century*

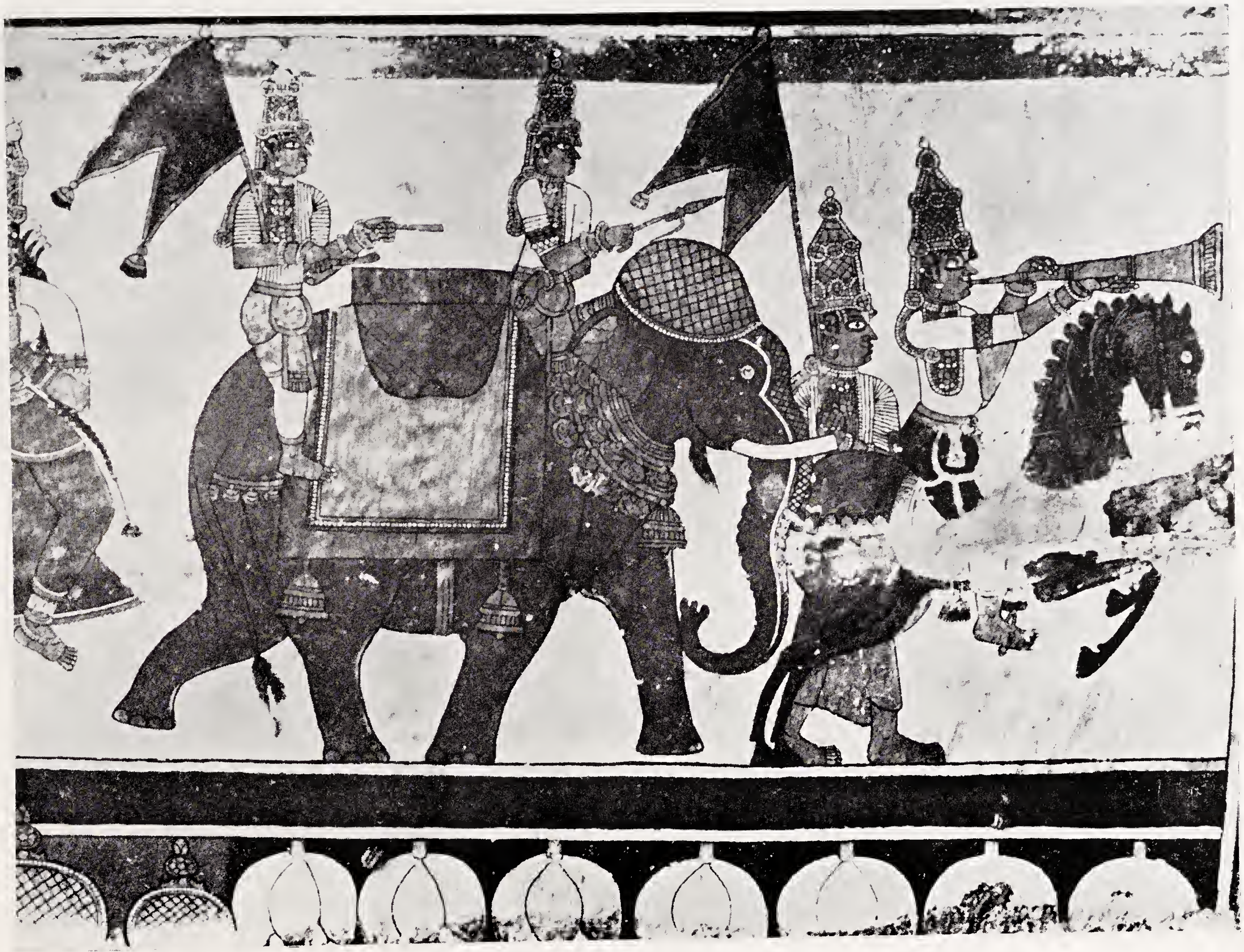


PLATE LII. *Scenes from the life of Vardhamana and Rishabhanatha. Nayaka. Tirupparuttikunram, 17th century*





PLATES LIII - LIV. *Scenes from the life of Vardhamana and Rishabhanatha, Nayaka, Tirupparuttikunram, 17th century*



PLATE LV. *Siva Tandava witnessed by celestials, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*



PLATE LVI. *Bhikshatana, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*



PLATE LVII. *Manmatha and Rati, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*

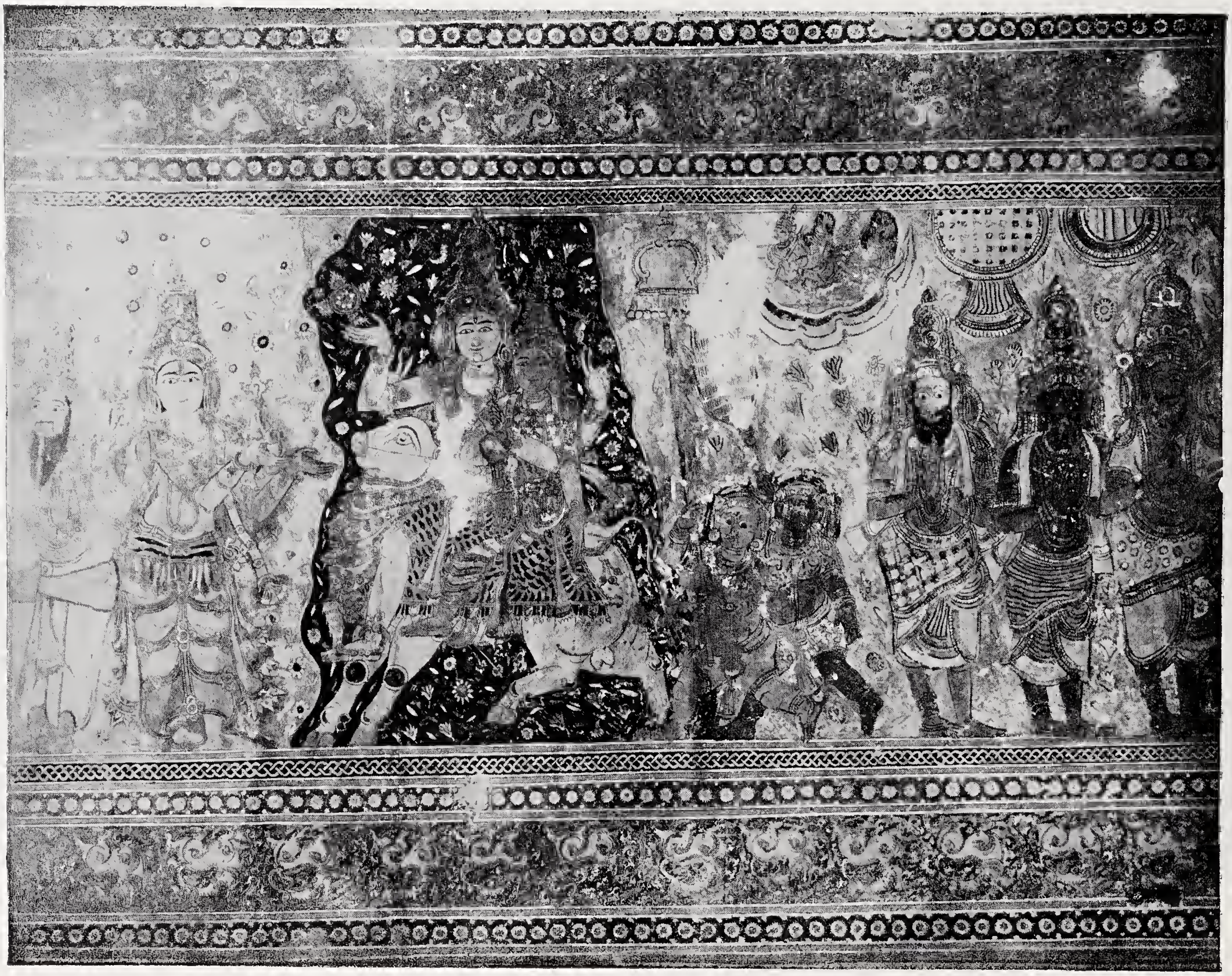


PLATE LVIII. *Vrishabharudha Siva, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*

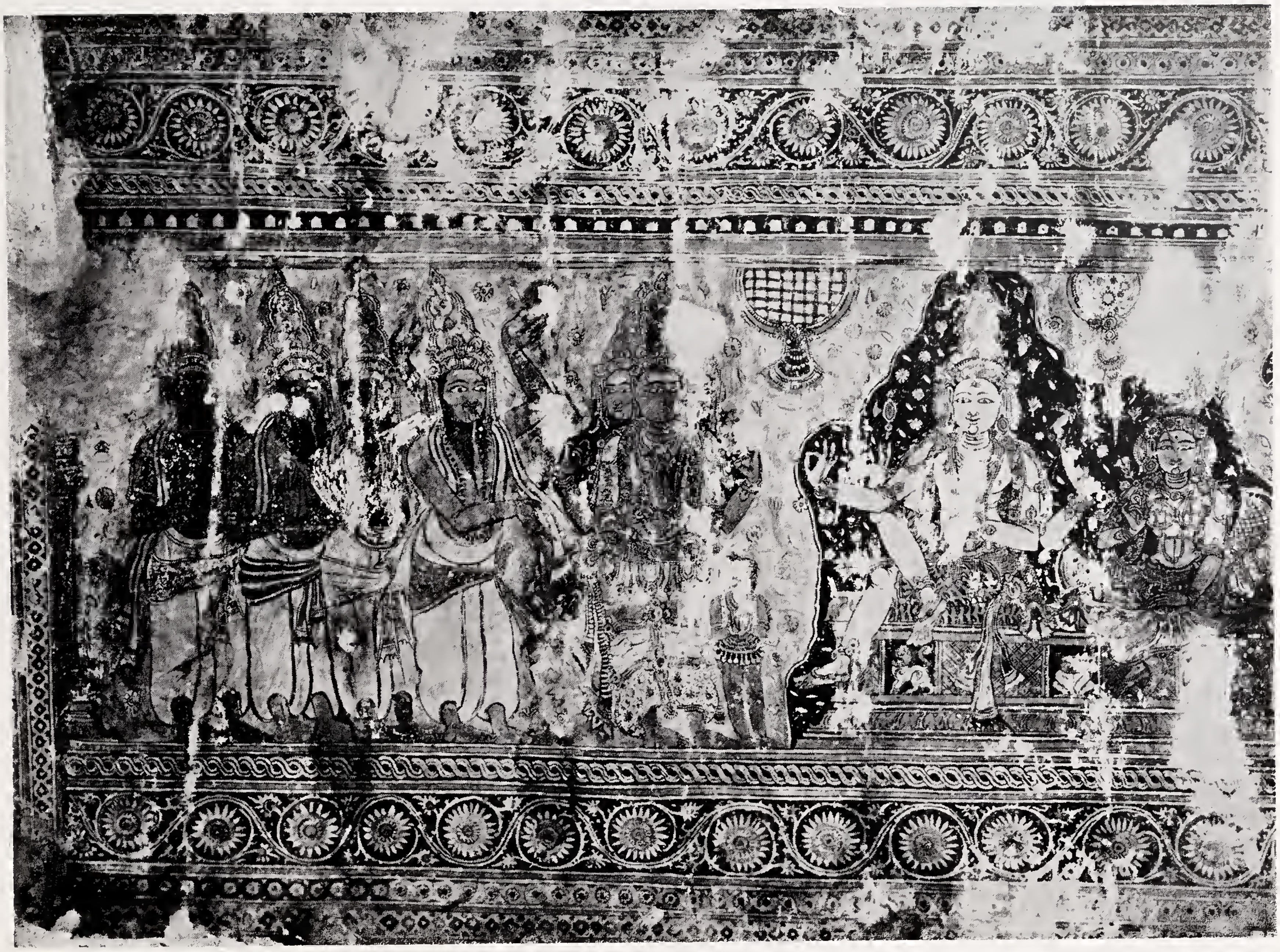
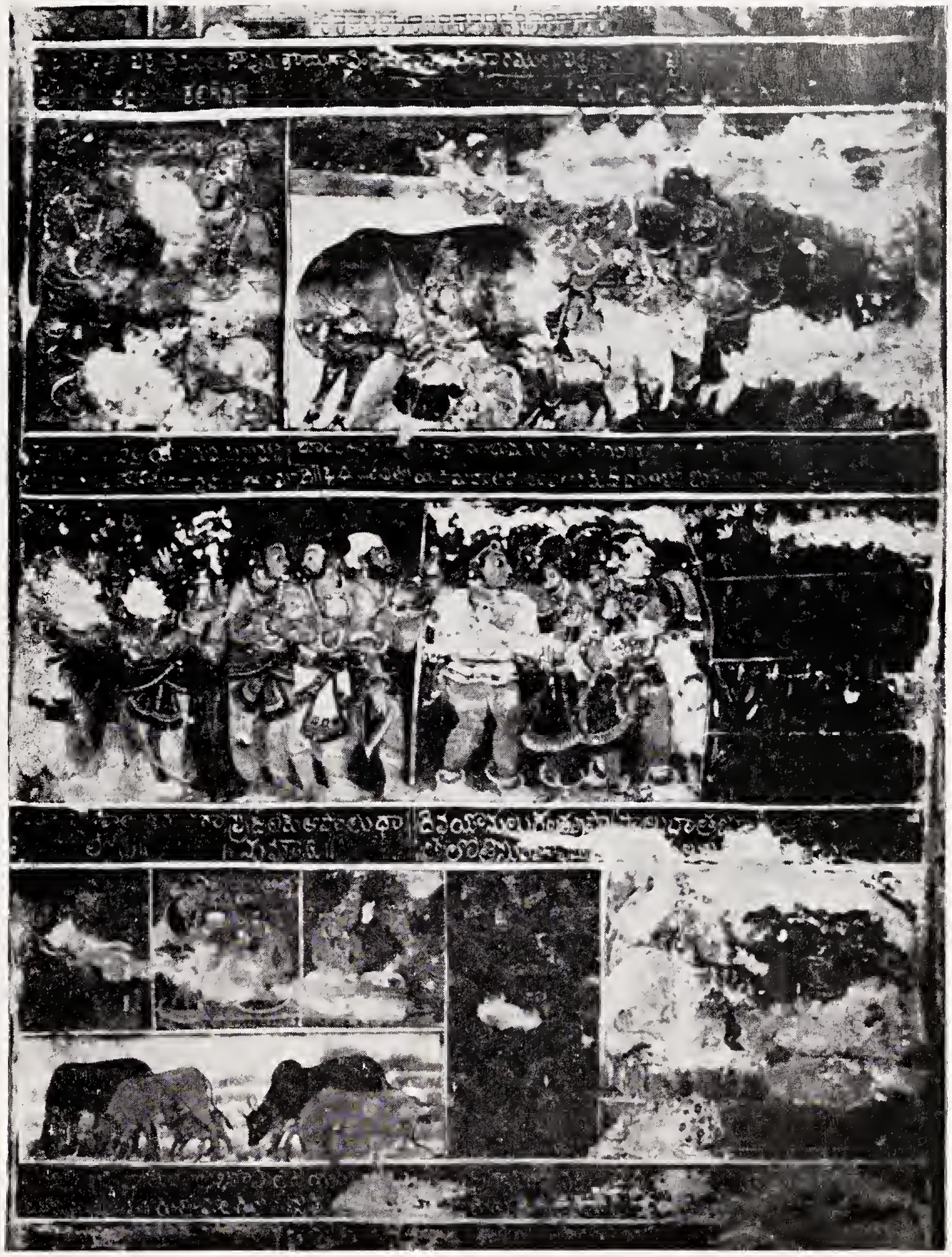


PLATE LIX. *Umasahita Siva, blessing Skanda as Gurumurti, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*



PLATE LX. *Celestial musicians witnessing Siva's dance, Nayaka, Tiruvalanjuli, 17th century*





PLATES LXI AND LXII. *Scenes from the Bhagavata Purana, Nayaka, Srirangam, 18th century*



PLATE LXIII. *Muslim warrior on horseback, Nayaka, Tiruppudaimarudur, 17th century*

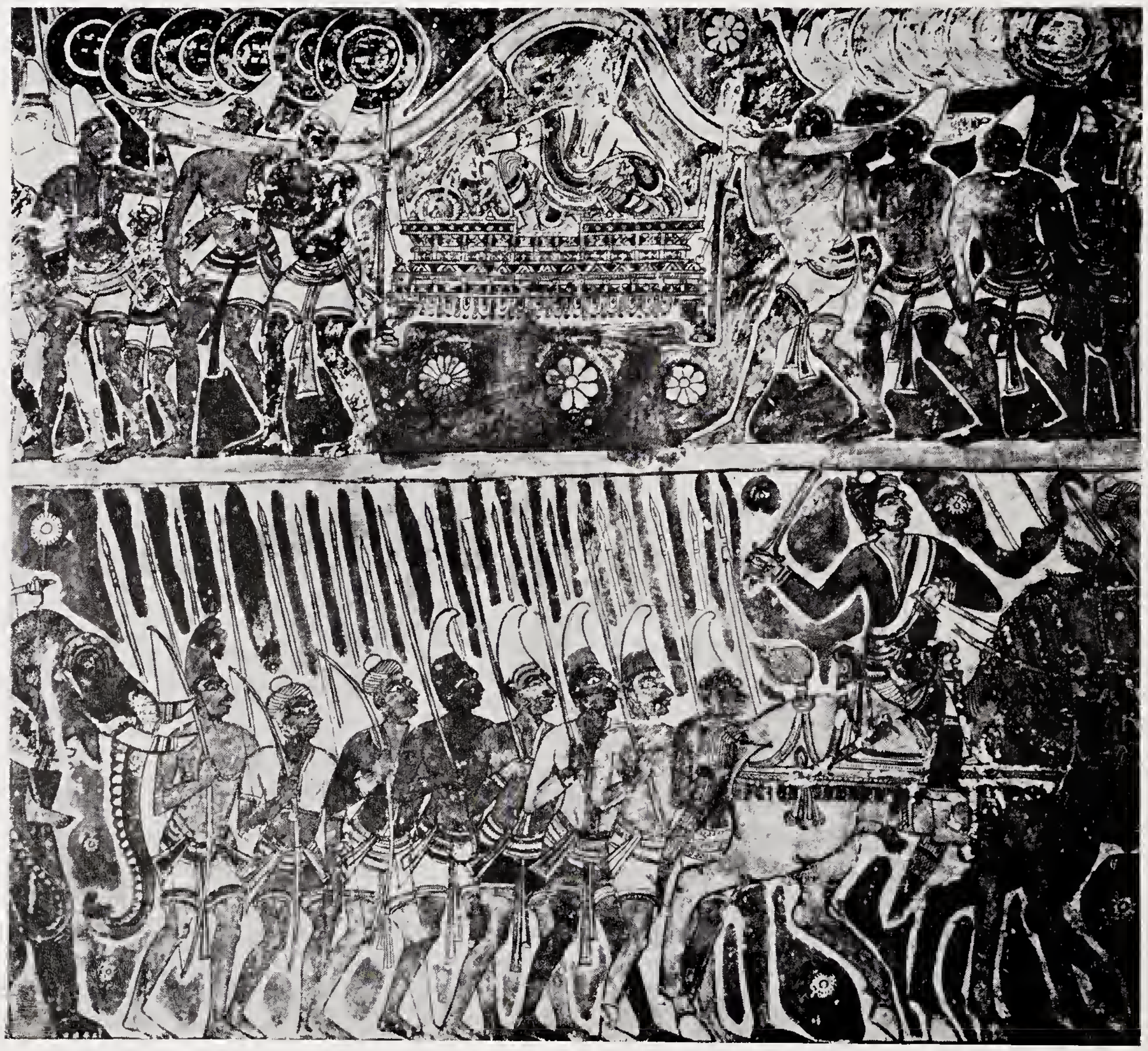


PLATE LXIV. *Army and King being carried on palanquin, nayaka Tiruppudaimarudur, 17th century*

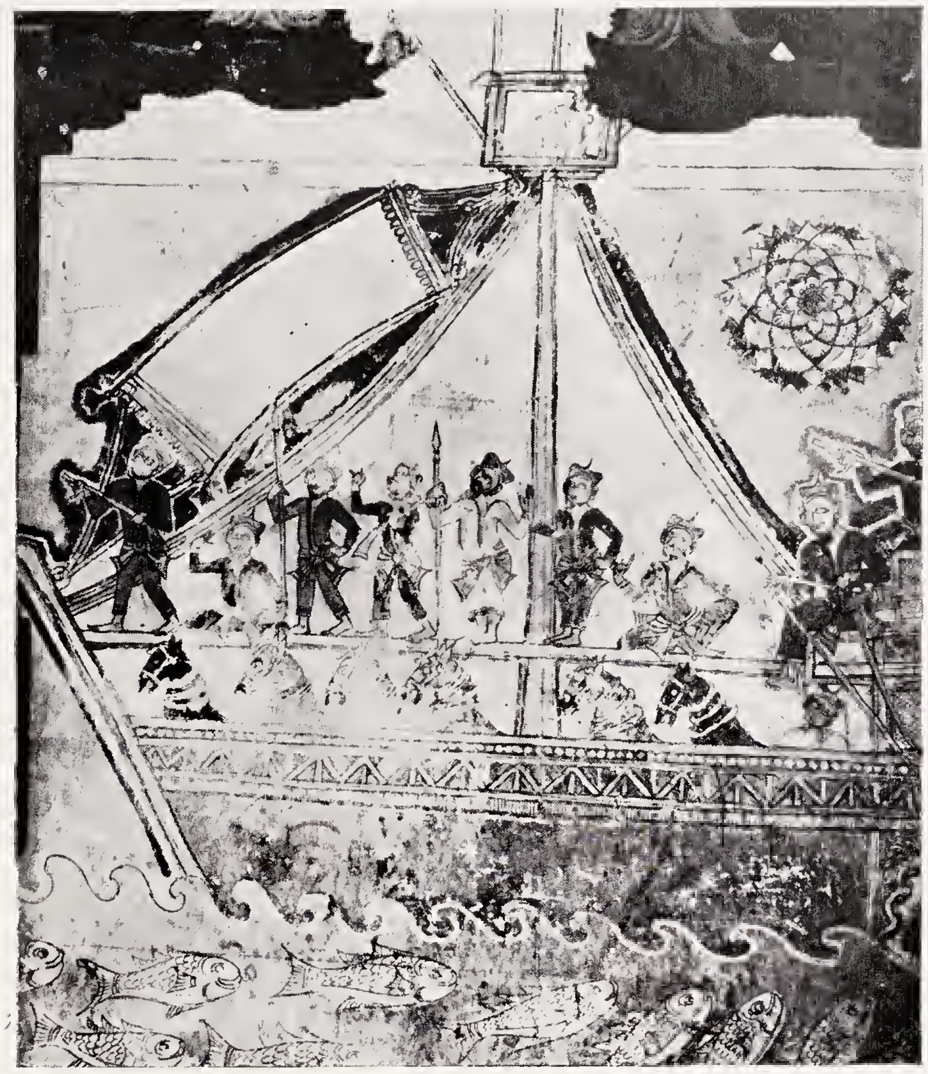


PLATE LXV. *Arab merchants with horses brought in ship, Nayaka, Tiruppudaimarudur, 17th century*



PLATE LXVI. *Tirugnana Sambanda and his miracles, converting Pandya King from Jainism, Nayaka, Tiruppudaimarudur, 17th century*

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SRI CALAMBUR SIVARAMAMURTI, whose sudden passing away was recently condoled widely in India and abroad was a typical product of a traditional oriental South Indian conservative extraction imbued with a significant academic equipment and apparatus of occidental analytical perceptions.

Born in 1911 to the heritage of Appayya Dikshita — the polymath of the 17th century Tamilnadu — he received his post-Graduate degree in Sanskrit, standing I Class first, from the Presidency College, Madras and was the student of the illustrious and revered Professor, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Pandit Kuppuswami Sastri, Vidya-Vachaspati. Showing an early flair for sketching and sculpting and a depth of knowledge in traditional Sanskrit lore, he soon inevitably gravitated towards the Government Museum, Madras, then a great centre of cultural and archaeological studies under the headmanship of Dr. Gravely. One of his early outstanding works in that institution was his study of the Art of Amaravati, and many similar studies were to follow from his facile pen. Joining in a few years' time the Archaeological Survey of India, as the Officer in charge of its Museum branch at Calcutta in the Indian Museum, another celebrated centre of Indological studies, he was soon to be owned by his learned contemporaries, Dr. Jitendranath Banerjee, Dr. Sunitikumar Chatterjee and others. A regular stream of studies on several regional Schools of Indian Art followed, besides a well-documented treatment of Indian Epigraphy. During that period, he was deputed by the Government of India as a member of a Cultural Mission to Indonesia, and as a result emerged a masterly presentation on the Art of Borobudur, later published in France. The next obvious shift for him was to the National Museum, Delhi, which he adorned with great distinction as its Chief, for more than a decade.

A scholar of truly international renown, no major Seminar on Indian art anywhere in the world was complete without the dignified and amiable presence of Sivaramamurti. He was decorated with PADMA BHUSHAN by the Government of India. His treatment of wide-ranging facts of Indian cultural heritage from Sata-Rudriya, Sri Laksmi and Ganga to Rishis of the past, had been fundamental, original and penetrative contribution on the many-sided creative activities and integrative characteristic of the ancient Indian cultural and social fabric. Possibly his most brilliant work which he did under his Jawahar Lal Nehru Fellowship, was on NATARAJA in INDIAN ART, which attracted an UNESCO award of recognition. A copious writer and dedicated exponent of Indian and Sanskrit culture of great profundity, he had made Indian regional Art schools and his own name alike, household names, in the process.

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